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**MOUNTAIN HOME HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® IDAHO SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 9, 2010) — In its 25<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Nickayla Skinner of Mountain Home High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Idaho Softball Player of the Year. Skinner is the first Gatorade Idaho Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Mountain Home High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Skinner as Idaho's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Skinner joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The state's returning Gatorade Softball Player of the Year, the 5-foot-7 senior right-handed pitcher finished 25-1 with a 0.82 ERA this season, recording 328 strikeouts and issuing just 20 walks and leading the Lady Tigers (29-3) to a second consecutive Class 4A state championship. The two-time returning Class 4A Southern Idaho Conference Player of the Year, Skinner, also a shortstop, batted .653 with 72 RBI, 22 runs scored, 19 doubles and 17 home runs. As a junior, she compiled a 25-2 record with a 0.42 ERA and 302 strikeouts in 168 innings. She also batted .515 with 51 RBI, 14 runs scored and 12 home runs during Mountain Home's 2009 Class 4A state title campaign.

Also a volleyball standout, Skinner has maintained a 3.83 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, she has volunteered locally as a youth softball instructor and as part of her school's student leadership program in addition to serving as a board member of Mountain Home's Parks and Recreation Department.

"When you have a freshman, you don't know how they're going to rise to the pressure as a 14-year-old," said Mountain Home Head Coach Chris Asbury. "She's risen to the moment every time we've asked her to. Every year, we put more on her, and she's responded. You look at somebody that talented, and you say, 'Wow, how does she get any better?' Each year, she was able to improve. Our school went 108 years without a state title in any sport, and now we have two in two years. She's part of a historic senior class that brought something special to this school and this community."

Skinner has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the College of Idaho this fall.

The Gatorade Player of the Year program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by ESPN RISE and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Skinner joins recent Gatorade Idaho Softball Players of the Year Joni Cook (2007-08, Eagle) and Britney Croner (2006-07, Bishop Kelly) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners, and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit [playeroftheyear.gatorade.com](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

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