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**POLAND SEMINARY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® OHIO 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 Erin Gabriel of Poland Seminary High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Ohio Softball Player of the Year. Gabriel is the first Gatorade Ohio Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Poland Seminary 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 Gabriel as Ohio's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Gabriel 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 5-foot-7 sophomore right-handed pitcher led the Bulldogs (30-2) to the Division II state final, posting a 21-1 record and a 0.24 ERA along with 318 strikeouts against just 18 walks in 142 innings. At the plate, she owned a .562 batting average and a .753 slugging percentage along with three home runs and 28 RBI. A 2010 USA Softball Junior Women's National Team selection camp invitee, Gabriel had thrown four no-hitters in the state tournament entering the final four, including a five-inning perfect game against Ashtabula Edgewood when she fanned all 15 batters she faced.

Gabriel has maintained an unweighted 4.0 GPA and is ranked first in her class. She has volunteered locally as a youth softball instructor and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with her church youth group.

"Erin Gabriel has been absolutely dominant for us all year long," said Poland Seminary High Head Coach Reid Lamport. "Every time we give her the ball, we know there's a chance she could do something great."

Gabriel will begin her junior year of high school 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.

Gabriel joins recent Gatorade Ohio Softball Players of the Year Tess Sito (2008-09 & 2007-08, Elyria) and Jessica Simpson (2006-07, Hoover) 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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