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Contact: Julie Mason (412-561-1014)

**BINGHAM HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® UTAH SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 9, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Tori Almond of Bingham High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Utah Softball Player of the Year. Almond is the second Gatorade Utah Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Bingham 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 Almond as Utah's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Almond 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 6-foot-1 senior pitcher led the Miners (26-7) to a third straight Class 5A state championship this past season, posting a 21-5 record and a 0.30 earned run average while recording 334 strikeouts and issuing just 28 walks. The 2007-08 Gatorade Utah Softball Player of the Year, Almond recorded four no-hitters, as well as two perfect games, allowing 62 hits in 162.2 innings. At the plate, the three-time Class 5A State Tournament MVP batted .329 with six doubles and 18 RBI this spring.

Almond has maintained an unweighted 3.78 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as part of a fundraising campaign to benefit breast cancer research and on behalf of Habitat for Humanity.

"Tori Almond is pure speed—she's tough to hit just because of the speed she has on the ball," said Brad Jones, head coach of rival Viewmont High. "If she gets any movement at all, it's almost impossible to hit it. She is a dominant, dominant pitcher."

Almond has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Brigham Young University 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.

Almond joins recent Gatorade Utah Softball Players of the Year Shelbi Tyteca (2008-09, Viewmont), Tori Almond (2007-08, Bingham) and Cyd Allen (2006-07, Taylorsville) 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.

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