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**WALLA WALLA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® WASHINGTON 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 Hope Klicker of Walla Walla High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Washington Softball Player of the Year. Klicker is the first Gatorade Washington Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Walla Walla 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 Klicker as Washington's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Klicker 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-9 junior left-handed pitcher and first baseman led the Blue Devils (27-2) to the Class 4A state semifinals this past season, posting a 13-1 record and a 0.73 earned run average while recording 113 strikeouts and issuing just 13 walks. The Columbia Basin Big 9 Cascade Division MVP, Klicker recorded three no-hitters, as well as one perfect game, allowing 40 hits in 86 innings. At the plate, the two-time Class 4A First Team All-State selection batted .424 with six home runs, nine doubles and 28 RBI, amassing a .783 slugging percentage.

Klicker has maintained an unweighted 3.83 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a mentor for middle school students and as part of multiple community-service initiatives in association with her church youth group.

"Hope Klicker is a pretty dominating pitcher in our league," said Dave Kelley, head coach of rival Eastmont High. "She has such good mechanics, plus she plays first base, she hits the spot out of the ball and she defends well in the circle. She snags stuff that's unbelievable."

Klicker will begin her senior 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.

Klicker joins recent Gatorade Washington Softball Players of the Year Amanda Fitzsimmons (2008-09, Auburn Riverside) and Sam Skillingstad (2007-08 & 2006-07, Shadle Park) 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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