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**Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)**

**EAST KENTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® MICHIGAN BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 23, 2011) — In its 26<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Dzenan Catic of East Kentwood High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Michigan Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Catic is the first Gatorade Michigan Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from East Kentwood 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 Catic as Michigan's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Catic joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Tony Meola (1986-87, Kearney HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot-2, 175-pound senior midfielder led the Falcons to a 25-1-1 record and the Division 1 state championship this past season. Catic recorded 45 goals and 23 assists to help East Kentwood to its third Division 1 state title in four years. A 2010 ESPN RISE First Team All-American selection and also the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Mr. Soccer, Catic is a three-time Division 1 First Team All-State pick. Catic concluded his prep soccer career with 103 goals and 45 assists.

Catic has maintained a 3.85 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach and referee.

"Dzenan Catic is unique in that he plays the game with a European flavor," said Lars Richters, Catic's club coach with the Derby County Wolves. "He's really comfortable with the ball. He's very clever and technical. I think what makes him stand above even a good technical central midfielder is that he can score goals. He's not just a cute player, not just a possession player. He does things with the ball but he's also a really good goal-scorer for a midfielder."

Catic has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Michigan State 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.

Catic joins recent Gatorade Michigan Boys Soccer Players of the Year Soony Saad (2009-10, Dearborn), Kevin Cope (2008-09, Salem), and Casey Townsend (2007-08, Traverse City West) 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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