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**SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® SOUTH DAKOTA GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 10, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Alex Kneeland of Summit High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade South Dakota Girls Basketball Player of the Year. Kneeland is the first Gatorade South Dakota Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Summit 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 court, distinguishes Kneeland as South Dakota's best high school girls basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Basketball Player of the Year award announced in March, Kneeland joins an elite alumni association of past state girls basketball award-winners, including Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Diana Taurasi (1998-99 & 1999-00, Don Antonio Lugo HS, Calif.), Maya Moore (2005-06 Collins Hill HS, Ga.), Rashanda McCants (2004-05, Asheville HS, N.C.), Shyra Ely (1999-00, Ben Davis HS, Ind.) and Lisa Leslie (1988-89, Morningside HS, Calif.)

The 5-foot-8 senior guard has led the Eagles to a 23-0 record and a berth in the Class B state tournament, scheduled to begin on March 10. A two-time returning Class B First Team All-State selection, Kneeland has averaged 24.2 points, 4.0 assists, 4.0 rebounds and 3.8 steals per game. A three-time Class B All-Tournament Team selection, she was shooting 48.8 percent from the field, 38.0 percent from 3-point range and 80.7 percent from the free-throw line at the time of her selection. Kneeland produced 26.3 points and 5.7 rebounds per contest as a junior in addition to leading Summit to the 2009 Class B state championship as a sophomore. She has scored more points in the state tournament than any prep player in South Dakota history.

Also a volleyball and track standout, Kneeland has maintained a 3.94 GPA in the classroom and ranks No. 1 in her graduating class. Also the student body president and a member of her school's band, she has volunteered locally on behalf of her church, as a youth basketball referee and as part of community cleanup efforts.

"She's probably one of the most decorated players in the last 10-15 years," said Jamie Parish, head coach of rival Centerville High. "She's just flat-out a good player. She's not just a point guard or a shooting guard, she's more the type of player who you just say, 'Put the ball in her hand, and more good things will happen.' She's a scorer, she can shoot the 3-pointer and she can get to the basket and draw contact. She's just a player. You can't put a label on her."

Kneeland has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Augustana College in Illinois 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.

Kneeland joins recent Gatorade South Dakota Girls Basketball Players of the Year Shaunteva Ashley (2009-10, Roosevelt), Sam Ostarello (2008-09, Stanley County), and Alexis Yackley (2007-08, Sully Buttes) 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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