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Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

**KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® IOWA BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 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 Gabe Christianson of Kennedy High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Iowa Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Christianson is the second Gatorade Iowa Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Kennedy 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 Christianson as Iowa'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, Christianson 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.), Tony Meola (1986-87, Kearney HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot, 140-pound junior midfielder has led the Cougars to an 8-4 record entering this week's regular-season contest against Wahlert Catholic High, scheduled for May 10. At the time of his selection, Christianson had scored nine goals and passed for 13 assists in his first year playing high school soccer. A member of the U.S. Youth Soccer Region II Olympic Development Program team, Christianson was a member of the Iowa 1994 State ODP team that won the age-group ODP National Championships in March. He scored a goal in the team's 4-1 win over Cal-South in the title game.

Christianson has maintained a 3.10 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Kennedy High Chorale, he has volunteered locally as a youth soccer coach and referee and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with his church youth group.

"As an attacking center midfielder, Gabe has drawn man-marking from almost every team we have played in an attempt to neutralize his impact on the game," said Kennedy coach Steve Robertson. "He has all the technical and physical attributes you could want in a soccer player, and those strengths are complemented by his best asset: his soccer intelligence."

Christianson will begin his 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.

Christianson joins recent Gatorade Iowa Boys Soccer Players of the Year Erik Boyer (2009-10, Kennedy), Husref Jupic (2008-09, Hoover), and Hunter Kennedy (2007-08, Washington) 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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