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**MANSFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® TEXAS BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 10, 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 Aaron Simmons of Mansfield High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Texas Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Simmons is the first Gatorade Texas Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Mansfield 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 Simmons as Texas' 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, Simmons 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-1, 165-pound senior midfielder recorded 16 goals and 10 assists this past season, leading the Tigers (10-7-8) to the second round of the Class 5A state tournament. The District 5-5A Offensive Player of the Year and a three-time First Team All-District selection, Simmons is a member of the U.S. Soccer Federation Under-18 Men's National Team player pool. He concluded his prep soccer career with 34 goals and 31 assists.

Simmons has maintained a 3.56 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally through Home Depot's Community Assistance Program, helping to build playgrounds, and he has also served as a youth soccer coach and referee.

"Aaron Simmons is athletic and so versatile that he can play in so many different positions," said Bobby Muuss, the head coach at the University of Denver. "He's a good kid and a team guy. He's not just an athlete, he's a very poised and smart soccer player, too."

Simmons has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Southern Methodist 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.

Simmons joins recent Gatorade Texas Boys Soccer Players of the Year Zach Barnes (2009-10, Marcus), Dillon Powers (2008-09, Plano Senior), and Sam Garza (2007-08, Marcus) 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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