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**BUFFALO HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® WYOMING 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 Kasey Esponda of Buffalo High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Wyoming Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Esponda is the first Gatorade Wyoming Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Buffalo 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 Esponda as Wyoming'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, Esponda 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-2 senior midfielder has led the Bisons to a 12-1-1 record and a berth in the Class 3A postseason tournament, scheduled to begin May 19. Esponda enters the playoffs with 19 goals and 13 assists. The Class 3A Underclass Player of the Year as a sophomore and a junior, he is a two-time First Team All-State selection.

Esponda has maintained a 3.75 GPA in the classroom. Also a talented musician, he has served as a mentor for elementary school students and volunteered locally on behalf of youth sports programs.

"Esponda is an excellent all-around player," said Kevin Rizer, head coach of Sheridan High. "That team is where it is because of him."

Esponda has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at the University of Denver 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.

Esponda joins recent Gatorade Wyoming Boys Soccer Players of the Year Kevin Cox (2009-10, Cheyenne Central), Ben Borin (2008-09, Cheyenne East), and Zach Johnson (2007-08, Kelly Walsh) 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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