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**HAMILTON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE ARIZONA GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 12, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Rylie Johnson of Hamilton High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Arizona Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Johnson is the first Gatorade Arizona Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Hamilton 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 Johnson as Arizona's best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Johnson joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-11 senior midfielder and forward led the Huskies to a 25-0-1 record and the Class 5A, Division I state championship this past season. Johnson scored 25 goals and passed for 13 assists. The *Arizona Republic* Big School Player of the Year and the *East Valley Tribune* Player of the Year, Johnson led Hamilton to the first unbeaten season by a Class 5A-I program since 1996. She concluded her prep soccer career with 45 goals and 31 assists.

Johnson has maintained a 3.49 GPA in the classroom. A former competitive swimmer, she has volunteered locally as a youth soccer and swim coach.

"Rylie Johnson is a very versatile player, strong physically and a very smart kid," said Paul Manoogian, former head coach of Desert Vista High. "She was one of two kids in my five years that I went in with a game plan to mark. That's because of how versatile she is and what kind of impact she could have on the game. I think Rylie is a special player."

Johnson has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Coastal Carolina University in South Carolina 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.

Johnson joins recent Gatorade Arizona Girls Soccer Players of the Year Hilary Zenuk, (2009-10, Highland), Jessica Petznick (2008-09, Xavier College Prep.), and Brittany Cole (2007-08, Corona del Sol) 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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