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**NEUQUA VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE ILLINOIS GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 12, 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 Megan Oyster of Neuqua Valley High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Illinois Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Oyster is the first Gatorade Illinois Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Neuqua Valley 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 Oyster as Illinois' 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, Oyster 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-9 senior defender has led the Wildcats to a 21-0 record and a berth in the Class 3A regional semifinals, scheduled for May 17. Oyster has scored fifteen goals and passed for six assists during Neuqua Valley's unbeaten run, and leads a defense that had allowed just nine goals. A member of the U.S. Soccer Federation Under-20 Women's National Team Player Pool, she was a 2010 Parade All-American selection and a 2010 ESPN RISE First Team All-American.

Oyster has maintained a 3.6 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a mentor to a special needs student and as a youth soccer coach.

"Megan Oyster is the reason Neuqua Valley can put numbers forward and why they're so good," said Julie Bergstrom, head coach of rival Waubonsie Valley High. "Megan comes with a tough, bold, senior competitive personality that is on a mission this year."

Oyster has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at UCLA 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.

Oyster joins recent Gatorade Illinois Girls Soccer Players of the Year Vanessa DiBernardo, (2009-10, Waubonsie Valley), Rachel Quon (2008-09, Lake Forest), and Bri Rodriguez (2007-08, Waubonsie Valley) 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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