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**LIBERTY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE MISSOURI 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 Shea Groom of Liberty High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Missouri Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Groom is the first Gatorade Missouri Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Liberty 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 Groom as Missouri'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, Groom 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-6 senior forward has led the Blue Jays to a 20-3 record entering this week's regular-season finale against Raymore-Peculiar High, scheduled for May 12. Groom scored 41 goals and passed for 19 assists through 23 games. The 2009-10 Gatorade Missouri Girls Soccer Player of the Year, Groom is a member of the U.S. Soccer Federation Under-20 Women's Soccer Team Player Pool. The 2010 Missouri State High School Soccer Coaches Association Class 3 Player of the Year, Groom enters this week's game with 144 goals and 71 assists in her prep soccer career.

Groom has maintained a 3.90 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally at homeless shelters and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with her church youth group.

"Shea Groom is an absolute game-breaker," said Lincoln Roblee, head women's coach at Benedictine (Kan.) College. "If there was one player any team would have, it would probably be her. She's got game-changing abilities."

Groom has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on scholarship at Texas A&M 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.

Two-time winner Groom joins recent Gatorade Missouri Girls Soccer Players of the Year Morgan Marlborough (2008-09, Lee's Summit North), and Molly Campbell (2007-08, St. Teresa's Academy) 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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