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**SOUTHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® CONNECTICUT BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 1, 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 Sal Romano of Southington High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Connecticut Baseball Player of the Year. Romano is the first Gatorade Connecticut Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Southington 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 Romano as Connecticut's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award announced in June, Romano joins an elite alumni association of past state baseball award winners, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Roy Halladay (1994-95, Arvada West HS, Colo.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman HS, Tenn.), Chipper Jones (1989-90, Bolles School, Fla.), Derek Lee (1992-93, El Camino HS, Calif.) and John Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Prep, Wash.).

The 6-foot-4, 220-pound senior right-handed pitcher led the Blue Knights (15-5) to a berth in the Class LL postseason tournament, scheduled to begin May 31. At the time of his selection, Romano owned an 8-1 record on the mound with a 0.39 ERA, recording 91 strikeouts and just 11 walks in 54 innings pitched. A Rawlings/Perfect Game Preseason High School Senior All-Region First Team selection, he batted .444 with two home runs and 24 RBI through 20 games.

Romano has maintained an A-minus average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of a mentoring program at an elementary school and the Mill Foundation for Kids, which benefits children suffering pediatric illnesses.

"Romano is a real throwback, who affects the game offensively and defensively," said Bunty Ray, head coach of rival Bristol Central High. "He's an elite pitcher who throws three pitches and can throw them all for strikes, and he also swings the bat well."

Romano has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Tennessee 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.

Romano joins recent Gatorade Connecticut Baseball Players of the Year Colin O'Keefe (2009-10, Waterford), Matt Carasiti (2008-09; Berlin), Jason Esposito (2007-08, Amity), and Matt Harvey (2006-07, Fitch), 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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