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**FRANCIS HOWELL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MISSOURI BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 1, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Brett Graves of Francis Howell High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Missouri Baseball Player of the Year. Graves is the first Gatorade Missouri Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Francis Howell 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 Graves as Missouri's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award announced in June, Graves 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-1, 180-pound senior right-handed pitcher has led the Vikings to a 30-3 record and a berth in the the Class 4 state semifinals, scheduled for June 3. Graves has started 9-1 on the mound with two saves and a 1.27 ERA this season. A returning Class 4 First Team All-State selection as named by the Missouri High School Baseball Coaches Association, he has recorded 62 strikeouts in 55.1 innings. Also a shortstop, Graves has batted .442 along with 44 runs scored, 33 RBI, 12 stolen bases and five home runs. A Rawlings Preseason High Honorable Mention All-American as named by Perfect Game USA, he has produced a .702 slugging percentage and .532 on-base percentage. Graves finished 4-1 with a 1.76 ERA and 48 strikeouts in 47.2 innings as a junior. He also had a .477 batting average, 40 runs scored, 26 RBI, 19 stolen bases and 11 doubles in 2010.

Also a football standout, Graves has maintained a 3.34 weighted GPA in the classroom. A member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, he has donated his time as a youth baseball instructor and youth mentor.

"He is a classy kid and a great competitor," said Eric Gough, head coach of rival Fort Zumwalt West High. "He is the kind of kid to build a team around."

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

Graves joins recent Gatorade Missouri Baseball Players of the Year Chuckie Jones (2009-10, Boonville), Jacob Turner (2008-09; Westminster Christian Academy), Tim Melville (2007-08, Holt), and Nicholas Tepesch (2006-07, Blue Springs), 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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