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**NEWTON COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MISSISSIPPI SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 9, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Emily Davis of Newton County High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Mississippi Softball Player of the Year. Davis is the first Gatorade Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Newton County 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 Davis as Mississippi's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Davis joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The 5-foot-8 junior right-handed pitcher led the Cougars (34-2) to the Class 4A state championship this past season. Davis finished 18-0 on the mound with a 1.76 ERA. Miss Softball Mississippi as named by The Clarion-Ledger, she recorded 53 strikeouts in 107 innings. Also a third baseman, Davis batted .504 along with 54 runs scored, 45 RBI, nine doubles and eight home runs. A three-time All-State selection, Davis produced an .832 slugging percentage and .559 on-base percentage in 2011. In the three-game championship series against North Pontotoc High, she finished 1-0 with a 2.10 ERA on the mound and went 4-for-9 with six RBI at the plate despite battling a right ankle injury.

Davis has maintained a 4.00 GPA in the classroom. A member of the school's choir and student newspaper, she has donated her time as a youth softball instructor and on behalf of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

"I'll take Emily Davis any day," said Newton County Head Coach Justin Chaney. "She's the best all-around athlete I have ever coached, and she's just a great person."

Davis will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Davis joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Softball Players of the Year, two-time winner Londen Ladner (2008-09 & 2009-10, Northwest Rankin) and Whitney Kiihnl (2007-08, South Panola), 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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