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Contact: Adam Woullard (312) 729-3627

**POLAND SEMINARY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® OHIO 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 Erin Gabriel of Poland Seminary High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Ohio Softball Player of the Year. Gabriel is the first Gatorade Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Poland Seminary 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 Gabriel as Ohio's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Gabriel 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-7 junior right-handed pitcher led the Bulldogs (25-2) to the Division II state championship this past season. Gabriel posted a 16-1 record in the circle with a 0.82 ERA and 233 strikeouts in 110 innings pitched. Also the 2009-10 Gatorade Ohio Softball Player of the Year, Gabriel batted .571 with eight home runs, 46 RBIs and a 1.029 slugging percentage this spring.

Gabriel has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. A member of her school's French Club and Science Club, she has volunteered locally on behalf of the National Honor Society and the Mahoning County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

"Erin Gabriel is the best softball player to come out of this area in a long time, if not the best ever," said Ronie Haurin, head coach of rival Canfield High. "She is very polite and such a team player. Her physical achievements on the field are amazing."

Gabriel has verbally committed to play softball on scholarship at the University of Tennessee beginning in the fall of 2012.

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.

Gabriel joins recent Gatorade Ohio Softball Players of the Year Erin Gabriel (2009-10, Poland Seminary) and two-time winner Tess Sito (2007-08 & 2008-09, Elyria), 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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