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**CENTRAL YORK HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® PENNSYLVANIA 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 Lauren Walker of Central York High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Pennsylvania Softball Player of the Year. Walker is the first Gatorade Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Central York 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 Walker as Pennsylvania's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Walker 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 senior first baseman batted .721 along with 35 RBI, 31 runs scored, 25 walks, 12 home runs and seven doubles this past season, leading the Panthers (15-5) to a berth in the Class AAAA district tournament. The state's returning Gatorade Softball Player of the Year, Walker compiled a staggering 1.814 slugging percentage and .823 on-base percentage. Also a right-handed pitcher, she finished 8-3 on the mound with a 2.70 ERA and 124 strikeouts in 61.1 innings. A two-time returning Class AAAA First Team All-State selection as named by the Pennsylvania Softball Coaches Association, Walker also hurled four shutouts in 2011. She finished 12-7 on the mound as a junior with a 0.52 ERA and 267 strikeouts against just 23 walks in 122 innings as a junior in addition to batting .600 with 27 runs scored, 24 RBI and nine home runs.

Walker has maintained a 4.01 weighted GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and her school's Varsity, Leadership and Character clubs, she has volunteered locally on behalf of her church, as a youth softball instructor and as part of multiple food drives to benefit the homeless.

"Offensively, she got to a point in our league where very few teams pitched to her," said Central York High Head Coach Barry Brenneman. "As far as respect for a player, she was by far the most feared player in the league. That's what she meant to our team. The fact that she was able to perform the way she did with her foot injury was is incredible. She set the bar pretty high. It's going to be a long time before someone comes along and reaches it. She'll be remembered long after she's gone."

Walker has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of North Carolina 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.

Walker joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Softball Players of the Year Lauren Walker (2009-10, Central York), Nicole Smith (2008-09, Milton Area) and Alexa Bryson (2007-08, Greater Latrobe), 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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