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**TUPELO HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MISSISSIPPI VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (December 14, 2011) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Sarah Farmer of Tupelo High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Mississippi Volleyball Player of the Year. Farmer is the third Gatorade Mississippi Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from Tupelo 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 court, distinguishes Farmer as Mississippi's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award announced in December, Farmer joins an elite alumni association of past state volleyball award winners, including USA Volleyball players Kim Glass (2001-02, Horseshoe HS, Penn.), Kim Willoughby (1998-99, 1999-00, Assumption HS, La.) and Ogonna Nnamani (1999-00, University HS, Ill).

The 6-foot senior middle blocker led the Golden Wave to a 31-1 record and the Class III state title this past season. Farmer recorded 232 kills, 77 assists, 46 blocks and 30 service aces. She was named to the Class III All-State Tournament team.

Farmer has maintained an A-plus average in the classroom. An active member of her church youth group, she has volunteered locally on behalf of Habitat for Humanity and youth volleyball programs.

"She can dominate the game at any time from wherever she is on the floor," said Nick Eddlemon, head coach of rival Center Hill High. "She's an outstanding leader and she pulls up that entire team."

Farmer will attend Mississippi College next fall, where she will play volleyball.

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 ESPNHS 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.

Farmer joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Volleyball Players of the Year Victoria Nutting (2010-11, Hancock High School), Alison Welch (2009-10, Olive Branch) and Charquita Anderson (2008-09, Southaven) 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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