

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ashley Ginascol (312-729-3622)

**ELDORADO HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEW MEXICO BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 22, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Brad Carabajal of Eldorado High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade New Mexico Boys Soccer Player of the Year. Carabajal is the third Gatorade New Mexico Boys Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Eldorado 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 Carabajal as New Mexico's best high school boys soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Carabajal joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Alexi Lalas (1987-88, Cranbrook HS, Mich.), Heather O'Reilly (2001-02, East Brunswick HS, N.J.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-11, 145-pound senior midfielder led the Eagles to an 18-3 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Carabajal scored nine goals and passed for 10 assists, including the assist on the game's only goal in Eldorado's 1-0 win over La Cueva High in the state title match. The Class 5A State Player of the Year and a two-time Albuquerque Journal First Team All-Metro selection, he concluded his prep soccer career with 23 goals and 31 assists.

Carabajal has maintained a weighted 4.28 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally at a homeless shelter, the Ronald McDonald House and as part of a community-beautification project.

"Brad Carabajal is the perfect center-mid that can control tempo, distribute, defend, flip a field and score if need be," said Travis Nau, head coach of Manzano High. "He is a well-rounded player."

Carabajal has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at the University of New Mexico 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 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.

Carabajal joins recent Gatorade New Mexico Boys Soccer Players of the Year Nathanael Pacheco (2010 - 11, St. Pius X High School), Darren McAfee, (2009-10, Albuquerque Academy), Pat Pacheco (2008-09 Taos), Victor Rodriguez (2007-08, Las Cruces), and Seth C'de Baca (2006-2007, Sandia Preparatory) 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.

###