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**FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 7, 2013) — In its 28th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Kristi Kirshe of Franklin High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Kirshe is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Franklin 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 Kirshe as Massachusetts' best high school girls soccer player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Soccer Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Kirshe 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-4 senior forward led the Panthers to a 22-0-1 record and the Division 1 state championship this past season. Kirshe scored 40 goals and passed for 13 assists, scoring both goals in a 2-0 win over Nashoba Regional High in the state title game. An All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America and the Boston Globe's Division 1 Player of the Year, Kirshe was also named Miss Soccer by ESPNBoston.com. She concluded her prep soccer career with 102 goals and 44 assists.

Kirshe has maintained a 4.27 weighted GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a middle school math tutor and as a youth basketball, soccer and lacrosse coach. She's also donated her time on behalf of the Relay for Life.

"Kristi Kirshe is the player to build a team around," said Steve Santos, head coach of Attleborough High. "She works hard and makes others around her better."

Kirshe has made a verbal commitment to attend Williams College where she will play soccer beginning 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 the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), 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.

Kirshe joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Girls Soccer Players of the Year Hayley Dowd, (2011-12, Peabody High School), Sam Mewis (2010 - 11 & 2009-10, Whitman-Hanson Regional High School), Danielle Dakin (2008-09, Minnechaug Regional High School), Hayley Brock (2007-08, Acton-Boxborough Regional High School), and Amy Caldwell (2006-2007, Braintree) 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 www.gatorade.com/poy.

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