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**BILLINGS SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MONTANA 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 Rachel Koehler of Billings Senior High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Montana Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Koehler is the first Gatorade Montana Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Billings Senior 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 Koehler as Montana's 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, Koehler 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 senior defender scored two goals, passed for two assists and anchored a defense that allowed just 10 goals this past season, leading the Lady Broncs (13-3) to the Class AA state championship game. A three-time Great Falls Tribune Super-State All-Star and a three-time First Team All-State selection, Koehler is a four-year starter. Also an All-State basketball player, Koehler tore the anterior cruciate ligament in her left knee in December.

Koehler has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as a youth mentor and coach and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with her church youth group.

"Rachel Koehler has made a huge impact on her team as well as the state for the past two seasons," said Crystal McCamis, head coach of Billings West High. "She is a very strong player who wins and distributes the ball extremely well out of the back. She is extremely dominant and continually shuts down the best offensive players in the state."

Koehler has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at Cal-Poly San Luis Obispo 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.

Koehler joins recent Gatorade Montana Girls Soccer Players of the Year Savannah Witt (2011-12, Billings West High School), Jackie Elliott (2010 - 11, Billings Central Catholic High School), Tess Hagenlock (2009-10, Bozeman), Lauren Hickok (2008-09, Bozeman High School), Meghan O'Connell (2007-08, Flathead High School), and Kirsten Tilleman (2006-2007, Bozeman) 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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