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**NORTHERN HIGHLANDS REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEW JERSEY 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 Clare Shea of Northern Highlands Regional High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Shea is the first Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Northern Highlands Regional 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 Shea as New Jersey'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, Shea 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-9 junior midfielder led the Highlanders to a 24-0 record and a second straight Group 3 state title this past season. Shea scored 34 goals and passed for nine assists, including nine goals and five assists in the postseason for Northern Highlands, which has won 48 straight games. The Bergen Record Player of the Year and a two-time New Jersey Soccer Coaches Association First Team All-State pick, she concluded her junior year with 61 goals and 19 assists in her prep soccer career.

Shea has maintained a 4.05 unweighted GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally with autistic children and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with her church youth group.

"I just love watching Clare play," said Amy Lombardo, head coach of Pascack Valley High. "Her work ethic is tremendous. She just does everything on the field. She is one of my favorite high school players of all-time."

Shea has verbally committed to attend the United States Military Academy, where she will play soccer beginning in the fall of 2014.

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.

Shea joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Girls Soccer Players of the Year Caroline Chagares (2011-12, Ramapo High School), Danielle Colaprico (2010 - 11, Red Bank Catholic High School), Kaitlyn Kerr (2009-10 & 2008-09, The Pennington School), Shannon Mayrose (2007-08, Freehold High School), and Ingrid Wells (2006-2007, Montclair) 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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