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**THURSTON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE OREGON 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 Ashlee Schulz of Thurston High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Oregon Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Schulz is the first Gatorade Oregon Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Thurston 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 Schulz as Oregon'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, Schulz 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-5 senior defender led the Colts to a 17-0-1 record and the Class 6A state title this past season. Schulz scored six goals, passed for six assists and anchored a defense that allowed only six goals and recorded 14 shutouts, including three shutouts in four postseason games. The Oregonian's Class 6A Player of the Year, Schulz is a member of the U.S. Youth Soccer Region IV Olympic Development Program team. She concluded her prep soccer career with 18 goals and 18 assists.

Schulz has maintained a 3.70 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally with the Eugene Police Department, as a youth soccer coach and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with the Thurston High National Honor Society.

"Ashlee was one of the toughest players we played against all year," said Tim Copeland, head coach of Grant High. "She is a very physical defender and was great in the air. We had three Division I players who played forward for us this year, and Ashlee really shut down all of them the two times we played."

Schulz has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at the University of Oregon 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.

Schulz joins recent Gatorade Oregon Girls Soccer Players of the Year Anna-Marie Popma (2011-12, Tualatin High School), Maryn Beutler (2010 - 11, Bend Senior High School), Sarah Bridges (2009-10, Jesuit), Kendall Johnson (2008-09, Lincoln High School), and Courtney Verloo (2007-08 & 2006-2007, Tualatin High School), 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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