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**NIWOT HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® COLORADO SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 2013) — In its 28<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Nickie Blue of Niwot High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Colorado Softball Player of the Year. Blue is the first Gatorade Colorado Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Niwot 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 Blue as Colorado's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Blue joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The 6-foot-1 senior right-handed pitcher led the Cougars (23-2) to the Class 4A state final this past season. Blue posted a 21-2 record with a 0.47 ERA in the circle, while batting .520 with 5 home runs and 33 RBI at the plate. She struck out 287 batters with just 12 walks in 149 innings pitched. Blue was the Northern Conference Player of the Year and a member of the Denver Post All-Colorado Team.

Blue has maintained a 3.75 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of the Salvation Army, youth softball programs and an elementary school literacy-outreach initiative.

"She's an intimidating presence on the mound, and she has wonderful command of her pitches," said Paul Seifried, head coach at Broomfield High. "She's an excellent offensive player too, a very strong hitter."

Blue has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of South Carolina 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.

Blue joins recent Gatorade Colorado Softball Players of the Year Rainey Gaffin (2011-12 & 2010-11, Legacy High School), Shelby Babcock (2009-10 & 2008-09, Legacy), and Mallory Duran (2007-08 & 2006 - 07, Windsor) 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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