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## **ROCKY RIVER HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE OHIO GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (February 6, 2014) — In its 29<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 Abby Elinsky of Rocky River High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Ohio Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Elinsky is the first Gatorade Ohio Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Rocky River 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 Elinsky as Ohio'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, Elinsky 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 senior forward led the Pirates to a 22-0-1 record and the Division II state title this past season. Elinsky scored 43 goals and passed for 19 assists, including a goal and an assist in a 3-1 win over Granville High in the state final. The 2013 Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association's Miss Soccer winner, Elinsky was an All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America and earned Girls Soccer Player of the Year honors as named by the Cleveland Plain Dealer. She concluded her prep soccer career with 108 goals and 49 assists.

Elinsky, who completed high school in December, graduated with a 3.20 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of a homeless shelter and food bank, as a youth soccer coach and has participated in a fundraising campaign to benefit the Gathering Place, which assists families of cancer patients.

"Abby had an amazing season and was the main reason her team was so successful," said Carmen Ptacek, head coach of Hathaway Brown High. "She is a gifted player who possesses both speed and skill and is lethal one-on-one. She is an offensive package who has great finishing abilities and the ability to create for herself and her teammates."

Elinsky has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at the University of Illinois and matriculated last month.

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.

Elinsky joins recent Gatorade Ohio Girls Soccer Players of the Year Sandra Yu (2012-13 & 2010-11, Walsh Jesuit High School), Ashley Meier, (2011-12, Strongsville High School), Elizabeth Burchenal, (2009-10 & 2008-09, St. Ursula Academy), Tahnai Annis (2007-08, Pickerington High School North), and Rose Augustin (2006-07, Walsh Jesuit) 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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