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**CHEYENNE EAST HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE WYOMING GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 20, 2014) — In its 29th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Rachel Erickson of Cheyenne East High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Wyoming Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Erickson is the second Gatorade Wyoming Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Cheyenne East 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 Erickson as Wyoming'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, Erickson 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-10 senior forward has led the Thunderbirds to a 10-2-1 record and a berth in the Class 4A regional tournament against Cheyenne South, scheduled for May 15. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Soccer Player of the Year, Erickson scored 12 goals and passed for eight assists through 13 games. An All-Region selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, she is a three-time All-State and All-Region honoree.

Erickson has maintained a 3.77 GPA in the classroom. Also a basketball standout, she has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and youth sports programs.

"She's very physical and uses her size well, and she really knows how to finish," said Carl Matson, head coach at Campbell County High. "She makes herself known whenever she's on the field. You always need a game plan against her."

Erickson has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Black Hills State University 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.

Two-time winner Erickson joins Gatorade Wyoming Girls Soccer Players of the Year Marcia Ashdown (2011-12, Riverton High School), Sheree Small (2010 - 11, Campbell County High School), Makenzie Meade (2009-10, Laramie), Ariela Schreiber (2008-09 & 2007-08, Laramie), and Crystal Umphlett (2006-2007, Cody) 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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