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## **BARRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE ILLINOIS GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 19, 2015) — In its 30<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 Jenna Szczesny of Barrington High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Illinois Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Szczesny is the first Gatorade Illinois Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Barrington 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 Szczesny as Illinois'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, Szczesny 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 returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 5-foot-9 senior forward had led the Fillies to a 16-0-4 record and a berth in the Class 3A Fremd Regional semifinals at the time of her selection. Szczesny scored 28 goals and passed for seven assists through 20 games. A 2014 All-American selection by the National Soccer Coaches Association of America, she was the 2014 Mid-Suburban League Player of the Year and entered the postseason with 93 goals and 35 assists in her prep soccer career.

Szczesny has maintained a 3.19 GPA in the classroom. She has participated in fundraising campaigns to benefit cancer research and has volunteered locally as a preschool teacher and youth soccer coach.

"Jenna Szczesny is the best and most dangerous player whom we faced this season," said Willie Filian, head coach of Palatine High. "I have coached for 25 years, and she is the most athletic, quickest and most difficult player to contain of all of the forwards whom I can recall."

Szczesny has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at Loyola University Chicago 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.

Two-time winner Szczesny joins Gatorade Illinois Girls Soccer Players of the Year Zoe Swift (2012-13, Naperville North High School), Courtney Raetzman (2011-12, Conant High School), Megan Oyster (2010-11, Neuqua Valley High School), Vanessa DiBernardo (2009-10, Waubonsie Valley High School), Rachel Quon (2008-09, Lake Forest), Bri Rodriguez (2007-08, Waubonsie Valley High School), and Tessa Gavilsky (2006-07, Granite City 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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