FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

 Contact: John Manzo (312-729-3656)

Seattle Preparatory School STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE Washington GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

**CHICAGO** (February 4, 2016) — In its 31st year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced **Sam Hiatt of Seattle Preparatory School** as its **2015-16 Gatorade Washington Girls Soccer Player of the Year**. Hiatt is the first Gatorade Washington Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Seattle Preparatory 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 Hiatt as Washington’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, Hiatt 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 defender led the Panthers to a 22-0-1 record and the Class 3A state championship this past season. Hiatt scored five goals and passed for one assist and led a defense that allowed just six goals in 23 games. The Washington Soccer Coaches Association’s Class 3A Player of the Year, Hiatt missed seven games while training with the U.S. Soccer Under-20 Women’s National Team. She participated in the High School All-American Game in North Carolina in December and is rated as the No. 16 recruit in the Class of 2016 by TopDrawerSoccer.com.

Hiatt has maintained a 3.96 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally at an assisted-living facility and as a peer mentor to incoming Seattle Prep freshmen, and she has donated her time to the Special Olympics.

“Sam Hiatt wins every ball on the ground or in the air, builds the attack from the back and connects nearly 100 percent of her passes,” said Sam Procopio, head coach of Holy Names Academy. “That gives her teammates the confidence to attack, and that is what Seattle Prep’s mentality has been the last 2-3 years since Sam has taken on a bigger role.”

Hiatt has signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer on an athletic scholarship at Boston College beginning this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](http://www.gatorade.com/poy/overview.aspx) 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](http://www.usatodayhss.com/customize), 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.

Hiatt joins recent Gatorade Washington Girls Soccer Players of the Year Kelsey Turnbow (2014-15 & 2013-14, Central Valley High School), Audrey Thomas (2012-13, Issaquah High School), Isabel Farrell (2011-12, Interlake High School), Brooke Gilbert (2010–11, Glacier Peak High School), Lindsay Elston (2009-10, Eastlake High School), Emily Hurd (2008–09, Eastlake High School), and Kate Deines (2007-08 & 2006-07, Issaquah 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)*.*

###