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LIVINGSTON ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE TENNESSEE GIRLS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (February 11, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Kat Nigro of Livingston Academy as its 2009-10 Gatorade Tennessee Girls Soccer Player of the Year. Nigro is the first Gatorade Tennessee Girls Soccer Player of the Year to be chosen from Livingston Academy.

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 Nigro as Tennessee'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, Nigro 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.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), 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-5 junior midfielder recorded 34 goals and 15 assists this past season, leading the Wildcats (13-6) to the Division II A/AA regional semifinals. A member of the U.S. Soccer Federation Under-17 Women's National Team and a former captain of the Under-15 Girls National Team, Nigro is a two-time First Team All-State selection. She has already recorded 108 goals and 60 assists in her high school career.

Nigro has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. A member of multiple Livingston Academy academic clubs, she has volunteered locally on behalf of her church community and a blood-donation drive. Nigro has also donated her time at an area food bank and by participating in an initiative to send gift boxes to soldiers serving overseas.

"Kat Nigro just has an extreme passion for the game of soccer. She lives it, she breathes it," said Cristen Czubik, Nigro's club coach with the Brentwood Soccer Club. "What sets her apart is she just gets the game at a higher level than most girls at her age. She understands the game so much more technically and tactically. She gets the intricacies of the game so easily for a 17-year-old. It's fun to watch her play."

Nigro has verbally committed to play soccer at the University of North Carolina beginning in the fall of 2011.

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 ESPN RISE and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, 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.

Nigro joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Girls Soccer Players of the Year Susannah Dennis (2008-09 & 2007-08, Battle Ground Academy) and Kelly Dyer (2006-07, St. Agnes Academy) 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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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