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**DIKE-NEW HARTFORD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE IOWA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 24, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Hannah Willms of Dike-New Hartford High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Iowa Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Willms is the first Gatorade Iowa Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Dike-New Hartford 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 track, distinguishes Willms as Iowa's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Willms joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Allyson Felix (2001-02, Los Angeles Baptist, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Iowa) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The 6-foot senior sprinter and jumper swept the 200- and 400-meter dash and added a gold medal in the high jump at the Class 2A state meet this spring, leading the Wolverines to fourth place as a team. Also the 2009-10 Gatorade Iowa Volleyball Player of the Year, Willms shattered the state record in the 400 with a time of 53.96 seconds, which was ranked No. 19 in the nation among prep competitors at the time of her selection and eclipsed the mark set by two-time Olympian Natasha Kaiser in 1984 (54.09). Willms also set a meet record in the high jump at the Drake Relays with a clearance of 6 feet, one inch, the nation's No. 1 mark among prep competitors at the time of her selection.

Willms has maintained a 3.71 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of Big Brother Big Sisters of America and as a youth track and volleyball coach.

"Hannah Willms is one of the most tremendous athletes I have ever coached," said Dike-New Hartford High head coach Jann Miller. "We'll be lucky to have one like her again sometime. She is a top-notch competitor and has an incredible work ethic."

Willms has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at Iowa State University.

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.

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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