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**WASILLA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE ALASKA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 21, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Morgan Dampier of Wasilla High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Alaska Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Dampier is the first Gatorade Alaska Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Wasilla 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 Dampier as Alaska'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, Dampier 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, Ia.) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The 5-foot-6 junior won two individual state championships this spring and led the Warriors to the program's first-ever Class 4A state title. Dampier won the 400-meter dash with a time of 57.43 seconds and captured the 800-meter run in a state-record time of 2:10.42, which ranked as the nation's No. 35 performance among prep competitors in 2011 at the time of her selection. Named Most Outstanding Athlete at the Class 4A state meet, Dampier finished second in the 100-meter dash in 12.55 seconds in addition to anchoring the second-place 4x400-meter relay. She also won the 800 meters at the 2010 Class 4A meet as a sophomore.

Dampier has maintained a 4.03 weighted GPA average in the classroom. In addition to working on behalf of the Division of Forestry, she has volunteered locally as part of clothing and canned food drives as well as a holiday gift-giving campaign. Raised in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain throughout her childhood, Dampier has also donated her time as a mentor, encouraging area youth to live tolerant lifestyles and educating peers about cultural diversity.

"Without a doubt, without her, we wouldn't have won the state championship," said Wasilla High Head Coach Gary Howell. "Our school opened in 1973, and we'd never won a state title. She ran in four events every meet, and she usually won all four. You can't put a price tag on that. She led by example and elevated the bar for the whole girls program."

Dampier will begin her senior year of high school 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 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.

Dampier joins recent Gatorade Alaska Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Lierin Flanagan (2009-10, Kenai Central), Gabrielle Todd (2008-09, Bartlett), and Leah Francis (2007-08, Juneau-Douglas) 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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