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**KENNEBUNK HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MAINE 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 Abbey Leonardi of Kennebunk High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Maine Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Leonardi is the second Gatorade Maine Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Kennebunk 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 Leonardi as Maine'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, Leonardi 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-1 junior won the 1600-meter run with a time of 4:55.39 and captured the 3200-meter run in 10:42.63 at the Class A state meet this spring. The state's two-time returning Gatorade Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year and three-time Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Leonardi finished first in the 3200-meter run for the second consecutive season at the New England Interscholastic Outdoor Track & Field Championships with a meet-record time of 10:19.09, which ranked as the nation's No. 10 performance among prep competitors in 2011. Leonardi set the meet records at 1600 and 3200 meters at the 2010 Class A state meet as a sophomore. She also won the 800- and 1600-meter runs at the 2009 Class A state meet as a freshman. Only one other athlete nationwide—Sacred Heart Academy (Kentucky) senior Emma Brink—has won Gatorade State Player of the Year honors six times in the award program's 26-year history. She placed ninth in the 2-mile run in 10:29.84 at this month's New Balance Outdoor Nationals.

Leonardi has maintained an A average in the classroom. She has donated her time to fundraising efforts on behalf of displaced civilians in Sudan's western region of Darfur.

"She's a unique athlete," said Kennebunk High Head Coach Geoffrey Drew. "She's the greatest high school distance runner in Maine's history. It's pretty incredible to have someone on your track team like that. She's very encouraging to other athletes, and she's willing to run other events that she wouldn't normally run. It's a great example. Other kids see how hard she works in practice, and they're like, 'Wow.'"

Leonardi 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.

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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