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**MIDPARK HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE OHIO GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 21, 2011) — In its 26<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Kaila Barber of Midpark High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Barber is the first Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Midpark 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 Barber as Ohio'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, Barber 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-7 senior won the 300-meter intermediate hurdles with a time of 41.99 seconds and soared 19 feet, 1.75 inches to capture the long jump at the Div. I state meet this spring, leading the Meteors to a third-place finish as a team. The state's returning Gatorade Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year, Barber also anchored the 4x400-meter relay quartet to a state title in 3:48.51. Her season-best 300 hurdle performance of 41.01 ranked as the nation's No. 2 mark among prep competitors in 2011 at the time of her selection. Barber finished second in the 400-meter hurdles at this month's New Balance Outdoor Nationals.

Barber has maintained a weighted 4.67 GPA in the classroom. An active member of the Key Club, she has volunteered locally on behalf of animal rescue efforts, youth sports programs and a fundraising campaign to benefit the needy in El Salvador.

"Kaila is an outstanding student, athlete and person," said Midpark High Head Coach Rick Mack. "She's the type of athlete who has every reason to be boastful, but she never is. She's elevated her performance to the highest level in all areas of school and sports."

Barber has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at the University of Notre Dame 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.

Barber joins recent Gatorade Ohio Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Kaila Barber (2009-10, Midpark) and Stephanie Morgan (2008-09 & 2007-08, Barnesville) 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

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