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**EDMOND NORTH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE OKLAHOMA 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 Hannah Helker of Edmond North High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Helker is the first Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Edmond North 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 Helker as Oklahoma'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, Helker 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 6-foot senior won the 800-meter run with a time of 2:17.77 at the Class 6A state championship meet this spring, leading the Huskies to a fifth-place finish as a team. A three-time state champion in the 800, Helker also captured second place in the 400 and anchored the 4x800-meter relay quartet to second place. She added an individual title at the state Meet of Champions, running a season-best 2:12.32 in the 800.

Helker has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of her church youth group, she has volunteered locally on behalf of developmental track programs, and has participated in Edmond North's student government.

"Hannah is an outstanding student-athlete and a pleasure to coach," said Edmond North High Head Coach Kent Douglas. "Not only does she excel on the track, but she also excels in the classroom."

Helker has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at Oklahoma Baptist University 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.

Helker joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Danielle Nowell (2009-10, Plainview) and Carissa Levingston (2008-09 & 2007-08, Midwest City) 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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