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**PENN WOOD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 23, 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 Eric Futch of Penn Wood High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Futch is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Penn Wood 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 Futch as Pennsylvania's best high school boys track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Futch joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ryan Hall (1999-01, Big Bear HS, Calif.), Meb Keflezighi (1993-94, San Diego HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.) and Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.).

The 5-foot-11 junior won the 300-meter intermediate hurdles in a state-record time of 36.43 seconds at the Class 3A state championship meet this spring, leading the Patriots to a fourth-place finish as a team. Futch also ran the lead leg on Penn Wood's 4x400-meter relay squad, which finished first at the Penn Relays. His state-championship performance in the 300 hurdles ranked as the nation's No. 3 time among prep competitors in 2011 at the time of his selection.

Futch has maintained a 3.52 GPA in the classroom. A peer tutor in his school, he has volunteered locally on behalf of youth track programs.

"Eric has a tenacious quality both on the track and inside the classroom," said Penn Wood High head coach Lenny Jordan. "He's an extremely determined, dedicated and ambitious young athlete."

Futch will begin his 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.

Futch joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Tom Mallon (2009-10, Central Bucks South) and Justin Shirk (2008-09 & 2007-08, Central Dauphin) 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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