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**ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE ALABAMA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 20, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Lacey Dent of St. Paul's Episcopal School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Alabama Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Dent is the third Gatorade Alabama Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from St. Paul's Episcopal 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 Dent as Alabama'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, Dent 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 five individual state titles this spring and led the Saints to a seventh consecutive Class 5A state championship as a team. The state's two-time returning Gatorade Girls Track and Field Athlete of the Year, Dent won the 100-meter high hurdles with a time of 14.39 seconds and the 300-meter intermediate hurdles in 44.60. She captured the long jump (18 feet, 7.75 inches), the triple jump (39 feet, 11.75 inches) and topped the field in the heptathlon with a state record 4,881 points.

Dent has maintained a 4.20 GPA in the classroom. A member of her school's student government, she has volunteered locally on behalf of youth track programs and area homeless shelters.

"Lacey has been the most outstanding female track and field athlete I have coached in my 41 years at the high school level," said St. Paul's head coach Jim Tate. "There has not been a day since she first stepped on our track as a seventh grader that she hasn't exhibited the determination and work ethic of a championship-caliber athlete."

Dent has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at the University of Alabama 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 ESPNHS 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.

Three-time winner Dent joins recent Gatorade Alabama Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Neal Tisher (2008-09, St. Paul's Episcopal School), and Madeline Morgan (2007-08, Mountain Brook) 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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