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**BILLINGS SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MONTANA 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 Danielle Aragon of Billings Senior High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Montana Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Aragon is the first Gatorade Montana Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Billings Senior 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 Aragon as Montana'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, Aragon 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-8 senior distance runner won three individual state championships this spring and led the Lady Broncs to the Class AA state title as a team. Aragon set a state record in the 800-meter run with a time of 2:08.31, won the 1600-meter run in 4:56.43 and the 3200-meter run in 11:09.28. She also finished second in the 400-meter dash with a time of 57.23 seconds. The 2010-11 Gatorade Montana Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year, she won the 800 at the Great Southwest Classic, breaking the tape in 2:11.16. Her record-breaking 800 clocking at the state meet ranked as the nation's No. 13 time by a prep competitor at the time of her selection.

Aragon has maintained a 3.88 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, she has volunteered locally as a youth mentor and on behalf of the Smile Network, an international fundraising organization that provides supplies to repair birth defects and genetic defects.

"Danielle Aragon is the best female athlete I have seen in 19 years of coaching," said Rob Stanton, head coach at Billings West High. "She is simply a phenomenal athlete and a great person and student."

Aragon has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on an athletic 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 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.

Two-time Aragon joins recent Gatorade Montana Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Kellee Glaus (2009-10, Whitehall), Alexa Aragon (2008-09, Billings Senior), and Melissa Jenkins (2007-08, Big Sky) 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.