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**EXETER HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEW HAMPSHIRE 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 Hillary Holmes of Exeter High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Holmes is the first Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Exeter 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 Holmes as New Hampshire'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, Holmes 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-6 senior won three individual state championships at the Division I meet and the Meet of Champions this spring. At the Division I state meet, Holmes won the long jump with a leap of 18 feet, 3.75 inches and the triple jump with a leap of 38-2 and led the Blue Hawks to the state title. She also won the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 44.81 seconds and placed second in the 100-meter hurdles in 14.94. Holmes concluded her prep track career with seven state titles and the state record in the indoor long jump (18-6.25).

Holmes has maintained a 3.84 GPA in the classroom. Selected to attend a state leadership convention for high school athletes, she has volunteered locally as part of fundraising campaigns to benefit the Special Olympics and food pantries and as a youth basketball instructor.

"Hillary Holmes has been dominant," said Bob Mullen, co-president of the New Hampshire Track & Field Coaches Association. "She is a true student-athlete and an awesome talent."

Holmes will attend Cornell University this fall, where she will compete with the track & field team.

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.

Holmes joins recent Gatorade New Hampshire Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Krista Vincent (2010-11, Somersworth High School), Arianna Vailas (2009-10, Central), Jocelyn Briggs (2008-09, Winnacunnet), and Anna Cioffredi (2007-08, Lebanon) 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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