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**BUCKHANNON-UPSHUR HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA 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 Emily Godwin of Buckhannon-Upshur High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade West Virginia Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Godwin is the first Gatorade West Virginia Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Buckhannon-Upshur 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 Godwin as West Virginia'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, Godwin 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 state's returning Gatorade Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year, the 5-foot-10 junior won four individual state titles at the Class AAA state championship meet this spring and led the Buccaneers to a second-place finish as a team. Godwin won the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 14.67 seconds, the 300-meter hurdles in 43.96, the high jump with a leap of 5 feet, 8 inches, and the long jump (17-10.5). The state record-holder in both hurdle events and the high jump, her season-best clearance of 5-10 ranked No. 6 in the nation among prep competitors in 2012 at the time of her selection.

Godwin has maintained a 3.98 GPA in the classroom. The president of her local Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter and the president of her school's DECA team, she has volunteered locally as part of fundraising campaigns to benefit breast cancer research and the American Heart Association in addition to donating her time on behalf of American Red Cross blood-donation drives.

"I put Emily in many different events this year to showcase what a great track athlete she is," said Jackie Zuliani, head coach of Buckhannon-Upshur. "She has it all: speed, endurance, hurdling ability and is great with technique required for field events. She deserves every compliment or award given to her."

Godwin will begin her 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 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 winner Godwin joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Bria Welker (2009-10, Frankfort), Taylor Brown (2008-09, Jefferson), and Meghan Mock (2007-08, Berkeley Springs) 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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