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**THE TATNALL SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE DELAWARE BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 21, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Sam Parsons of The Tatnall School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Delaware Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Parsons is the third Gatorade Delaware Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from The Tatnall 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 Parsons as Delaware'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, Parsons 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 senior distance runner won the 1,600-meter run with a time of 4:12.67 at the Meet of Champions this spring. The state's 2011-12 Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, Parsons also won three individual titles at the Division II state meet, leading the Hornets to second place as a team. He won the 800-meter run in 2:01.39, the 1,600 in 4:14.47 and the 3,200-meter run in 9:24.19. Parsons also anchored the 4x800-meter relay squad that broke the tape in 8:16.31. His 3,000-meter time of 8:28.20 and 3,200 time of 9:00.61 at the Arcadia Invitational ranked as the nation's No. 18 and No. 26 performances among prep competitors in 2012 at the time of his selection.

Also a cross country standout, Parsons has maintained a 3.01 GPA in the classroom. A member of his school's strategic games club and head of the Young Republican National Federation chapter, he has volunteered locally on behalf of a food bank, the Special Olympics, Amnesty International and Shoes 2 Share.

"Sam has been great," said Mike Mooney, head coach at rival Newark High. "I've seen him run since he was a little kid. Through sheer will and good coaching, he's just improved and improved and improved every year. He did some amazing things this year. Even to kids on our team, he was instrumental, always super positive, spreading good will in the running community."

Parsons has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at North Carolina State University 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.

Parsons joins recent Gatorade Delaware Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Tyler Tate (2010-11, The Tatnall School), Ryan Lee (2009-10, Archmere Academy), Bobby Kennedy Jr. (2008-09, Caravel Academy), and Isaiah Brisco (2007-08, Cape Henlopen) 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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