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**TWIN FALLS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE IDAHO 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 Erik Harris of Twin Falls High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Idaho Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Harris is the first Gatorade Idaho Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Twin Falls 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 Harris as Idaho'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, Harris 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-8, 133-pound senior distance runner won individual titles in the 800-meter run with a time of 1:53.86 and the 3200-meter run in 9:04.13, and earned second place in the 1600-meter run in 4:23.67 this spring, leading the Bruins to a fourth-place finish at the Class 4A state meet. A three-time First Team All-State honoree, Harris set a state record in the 3200, eclipsing the previous mark by two seconds. His time of 4:09.73 in the 1600 at the Chandler Rotary Invitational ranked as the nation's No. 32 time among prep competitors in 2012 at the time of his selection.

Harris has maintained a 3.98 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and an Eagle Scout with the Boy Scouts of America, he has served as the co-president of his school's honor choir and has volunteered locally on behalf of his church youth group.

"Erik Harris is the best runner ever to come through Twin Falls High School," said Twin Falls high head coach Marty Grindstaff. "While he hates to lose, he is the ultimate good sport when he is beaten which says a lot about his character."

Harris has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on an athletic scholarship at Brigham Young 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.

Harris joins recent Gatorade Idaho Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Dallas Burroughs (2010-11, Rocky Mountain High School), A.J. Bouly (2009-10, Borah), Mitch Simmonds (2008-09, Cole Valley Christian), and Eric Fitzpatrick (2007-08, Boise) 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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