

Contact: Adam Woullard (312-729-3627)

**LISBON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE IOWA 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 Conner Smock of Lisbon High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Iowa Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Smock is the first Gatorade Iowa Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Lisbon 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 Smock as Iowa'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, Smock 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 6-foot-1, 145-pound senior distance runner won the 1600-meter run with a time of 4:26.13, the 3200-meter run in 9:37.06 and anchored the first-place 4x400-meter relay in 3:35.48 this spring, leading the Lions to a third-place finish as a team at the Class 1A state meet. A three-time WaMaC Conference Athlete of the Year, Smock became just the seventh athlete in the 106-year history of Iowa high school track and field to win the 3200 all four years of his prep career.

Smock has maintained a 3.57 GPA in the classroom. An accomplished tuba player in his school's concert band, he is an Eagle Scout and has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple community service initiatives in association with the Boy Scouts of America.

"Conner Smock is well-known for always waiting at the finish line after his races and shaking hands and hugging each and every runner he competes against," said Lisbon High head coach Shane Amundson. "He is a far better person than he is an athlete and he is a once-in-a-lifetime athlete."

Smock has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on an athletic scholarship at Bradley 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.

Smock joins recent Gatorade Iowa Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Kevin Lewis (2010-11, Ottumwa High School), Kyle Dunn (2009-10, Linn-Mar), Omet Kak (2008-09, North), and Jarred Herring (2007-08, Burlington) 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.

###