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**FLATHEAD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE MONTANA BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 21, 2012) — In its 27<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Zach Perrin of Flathead High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade Montana Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Perrin is the first Gatorade Montana Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Flathead 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 Perrin as Montana'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, Perrin 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, 145-pound junior distance runner won individual state titles in the 1600-meter run with a time of 4:17.18 and the 3200-meter run in 9:20.84 at the Class AA state meet this spring, leading the Braves to a third-place finish as a team. A two-time First Team All-State honoree, Perrin also competed at the prestigious Arcadia Invitational, where he took eighth in the 3200 (8:55.24), earning the fastest mark ever recorded by a Montana runner at the meet. His time of 8:23.90 in the 3000-meter run at Arcadia ranked as the nation's No. 7 performance among prep competitors in 2012 at the time of his selection.

Perrin has maintained a 3.0 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of his church community and the vice president of his graduating class, he has volunteered locally as a youth track and field coach.

"Zach Perrin is a fierce competitor with a tireless work ethic as a runner," said Flathead High Head Coach Dan Hodge. "He has run some of the fastest times in the history of the state and he is only getting better."

Perrin will begin his 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.

Perrin joins recent Gatorade Montana Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Scotty Koehler-Owens (2009-10 & 2010-11, Billings Senior High School), Chris Wilson (2008-09, C.M. Russell), and Josh Pelczar (2007-08, Billings West) 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

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