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**RONALD REAGAN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NORTH CAROLINA 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 Craig Engels of Ronald Reagan High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade North Carolina Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Engels is the first Gatorade North Carolina Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Ronald Reagan 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 Engels as North Carolina'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, Engels 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 senior won the 800-meter run with a time of 1:54.43 and the 1,600-meter run in 4:18.24 at the Class 4A state championship meet this spring, leading the Raiders to a second-place finish as a team. MVP of the Class 4A meet, Engels also anchored the 4x800-meter relay quartet, which won in a time of 7:50.60.

Engels has maintained a 4.16 GPA in the classroom. Also a soccer standout, he is a member of his school's Earth Club and has volunteered locally on behalf of Habitat for Humanity.

"Craig's dominance of the middle distance events is unmatched," said Ronald Reagan High coach Chris Catton. "His range of events is incredible, and he's also the leader of our team and an incredible young man."

Engels has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on 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.

Engels joins recent Gatorade North Carolina Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Eric Winfrey (2010-11, Douglas Byrd High School), Isaac Presson (2009-10, Asheville), Wayne Davis (2008-09, Southeast Raleigh), and Dylan Ferris (2007-08, East Forsyth) 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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