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**DOTHAN HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® ALABAMA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 6, 2013) — In its 28th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Kasey Cooper of Dothan High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Alabama Softball Player of the Year. Cooper is the first Gatorade Alabama Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Dothan 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 field, distinguishes Cooper as Alabama's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Cooper joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The 5-foot-4 senior right-handed pitcher and shortstop led the Tigers (45-17) to the Class 6A state tournament this past season. Cooper posted a 28-11 record and a 1.23 ERA in the circle, compiling 382 strikeouts in 233.1 innings pitched. She also hit .583 with 22 home runs, 24 doubles, seven triples, 77 RBI, 87 runs scored and 22 stolen bases. Cooper is a two-time member of the Super All-State Team and was selected Class 6A Player of the Year as a junior.

Cooper has maintained a 4.37 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Key Club, she has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics, a church soup kitchen and youth softball clinics.

"Kasey Cooper is a total, all-around fantastic player," said Robyn Johnson, head coach at Enterprise High. "She's an excellent pitcher and hitter, just dangerous wherever she played."

Cooper has signed a National Letter of Intent to play softball on scholarship at Auburn 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 the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), 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.

Cooper joins recent Gatorade Alabama Softball Players of the Year Haylie McCleney (2011-12, Mortimer Jordan High School), Shelby Holley (2010-11, Pisgah High School), Leigh Streetman (2009-10, Hueytown), Heather Parker (2008-09, Mortimer Jordan), Lindsey Dunlap (2007-08, Hueytown), and Meghan Harbuck (2006 - 07, Baker) 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 www.gatorade.com/poy.

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