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**BEAUFORT HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE SOUTH CAROLINA GIRLS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 19, 2013) — In its 28<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Kaila Smith of Beaufort High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade South Carolina Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Smith is the third Gatorade South Carolina Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Beaufort 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 Smith as South Carolina's best high school girls track & field athlete. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year award to be announced in June, Smith joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Allyson Felix (2001-02, Los Angeles Baptist, 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.), Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt HS, Ia.) and Bianca Knight (2006-07, Ridgeland HS, Miss.).

The 5-foot-10 senior won the 400-meter hurdles at the Class 4A state meet this spring, leading the Eagles to an eighth-place finish as a team. Smith's time of 1:00.87 ranked as the No. 7 performance in the nation among prep competitors in 2013 at the time of her selection. She also placed second in the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 14.60 seconds. Smith was unbeaten in the 400 hurdles this spring, including a victory at the Taco Bell Invitational.

Smith has maintained a 3.80 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally as part of a fundraising campaign to benefit breast cancer research. She has also donated her time as part of area beautification projects and helped organize a teen outreach program through her church.

"Kaila Smith can do any event you put her in and do it well," said Glover Smiley, head coach of Spartanburg High. "She could finish in the top five in the state in seven individual and three relay events."

Smith has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on an athletic scholarship at Coastal Carolina University beginning 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.

Smith joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Girls Track & Field Athletes of the Year Jalacy Green (2011-12, Colleton County High School), LeAnna Morrison (2010-11, Berkeley High School), Briana Nelson (2009-10, 2008-09, & 2007-08, J.L. Mann Academy), and Jasmin Stowers (2006-2007, Pendleton) 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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