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**CHICOPEE COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE MASSACHUSETTS BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 20, 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 Alex Niemiec of Chicopee Comprehensive High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Niemiec is the first Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Chicopee Comprehensive 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 Niemiec as Massachusetts'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, Niemiec 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-7 senior won the high jump with a clearance of 6 feet, 6 inches and the long jump with an leap of 23-5.25 at the All-State meet this season. This past winter's Indoor Track Athlete of the Year as named by The Republican, Niemiec also swept the high jump at 6-4 and long jump in 23-4 while placing third in the 100-meter dash with a time of 11.14 seconds at the Central/West Division 1 championships. His winning long jump of 24-11 broke a 21-year-old meet record at the New England championships, where he also captured third in the high jump at 6-7.

Niemiec has maintained a 3.06 GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating his time as a youth athletic instructor, he has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and Lorraine's Soup Kitchen & Pantry.

"In my 25 years of coaching in Massachusetts, Alex Niemiec has been one of the best track athletes I have ever seen," said Alex Efstratios, head coach of rival Chicopee High. "There is nothing he cannot do in the sport of track and field, and I have observed him on many occasions helping other athletes and displaying great sportsmanship with his competitors."

Niemiec will attend Springfield College this fall, where he will compete in track and field.

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.

Niemiec joins recent Gatorade Massachusetts Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Josh Lampron (2011-12 & 2010-11, Mansfield High School), Sam Bombaugh (2009-10, Falmouth), Mark Vetere (2008-09, Andover), Omar Aden (2007-08, Charlestown), and Mark Amirault (2006-2007, Xaverian Brothers) 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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