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**PAPILLION-LA VISTA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 20, 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 Kenzo Cotton of Papillion-La Vista High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Nebraska Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Cotton is the first Gatorade Nebraska Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Papillion-La Vista 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 Cotton as Nebraska'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, Cotton 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-2, 190-pound junior sprinter won three individual state championships this spring and led the Monarchs to a third-place finish as a team at the Class A state meet. Cotton set a state record in the 100-meter dash with a time of 10.41 seconds, won the 200-meter dash in 21.54 and ran the opening leg for the 4x100-meter relay quartet that broke the tape in 41.40. Also the 2011-12 Gatorade Nebraska Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year, he won the 100 at the Kansas Relays with a time of 10.60 this spring.

Cotton has maintained a 3.7 GPA in the classroom. A devoted member of his church parish community, he has volunteered locally on behalf of the Health Occupations Students of America, a homeless shelter and as a youth camp counselor.

"Kenzo Cotton is an outstanding kid with who competes at a very high level," said Papillion-La Vista High head coach Joe Pilakowski. "His work ethic and dedication to the sport have driven him to succeed."

Cotton 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 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.

Cotton joins Gatorade Nebraska Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Ted Lampkin (2010-11 & 2009-10, Omaha Central High School), Mitchell Hunt (2008-09, Fremont), Brett Maher (2007-08, Kearney), and Todd Gulizia (2006-2007, Millard South) 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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