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**PARK CITY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE UTAH 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 Ben Saarel of Park City High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Utah Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Saarel is the first Gatorade Utah Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Park City 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 Saarel as Utah'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, Saarel 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 state's Gatorade Cross Country Runner of the Year, the 6-foot-1, 160-pound senior won the 800-meter run in 1:51.13 and the 1600-meter run in 4:07.95 at the Class 3A state meet this spring, leading the Miners to a 12th-place finish as a team. Saarel won the 3000 in 8:18.98 and the 3200 in 8:45.74 at the Arcadia Invitational in April with both times ranking as the No. 1 performance among prep competitors in 2013 at the time of his selection. He also won the adidas Dream Mile in New York with a time of 4:02.72, which ranked No. 2 nationally.

Saarel has maintained a weighted 4.49 GPA in the classroom. A member of his school's National Honor Society, he has volunteered locally as an English tutor.

"Even though Ben ran in a different classification than what I coach in, it was always a treat to watch him run," said Roger Buhrey, head coach of Syracuse High. "There was always a certain buzz around the stadium whenever he stepped on the track."

Saarel has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on an athletic scholarship at the University of Colorado 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.

Saarel joins recent Gatorade Utah Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Brad Nye (2011-12, Davis High School), Tyler Sorensen (2010-11, Richfield High School), Evan Argyle (2009-10, Pleasant Grove), Tyrell Yardley (2008-09, Syracuse), and Luke Puskedra (2007-08 & 2006-07, Judge Memorial Catholic) 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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