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**FLORENCE TOWNSHIP MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEW JERSEY BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 20, 2014) — In its 29th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Curtis Thompson of Florence Township Memorial High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade New Jersey Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Thompson is the first Gatorade New Jersey Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Florence Township Memorial 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 Thompson as New Jersey'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, Thompson 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, 245-pound senior won the javelin with a state-record throw of 224 feet, 10 inches at the Meet of Champions this season. The South Jersey Boys' Track and Field Athlete of the Year as named by The Philadelphia Inquirer, Thompson won the javelin event with a throw of 216-11 and took fifth by launching the shot put 49-2 at the Group I championships. His Meet of Champions javelin effort ranked as the nation's No. 1 performance among prep competitors in 2014 and No. 26 in U.S. prep history.

Also a football standout, Thompson has maintained a 3.79 GPA in the classroom. In addition to participating in his school's math club and peer counseling program, he has volunteered as part of the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life and as a youth football and basketball instructor.

"I've always been extremely impressed with how he conducts himself as an athlete," said Sam Palumbo, head coach of rival New Egypt High. "Individually, his personal drive is second to none. As a teammate, he always seems to be full of encouraging words, and even in situations where we defeated his team he would be the first to congratulate our coaching staff."

Thompson has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at Mississippi State 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.

Thompson joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Braheme Days Jr. (2012-13, Bridgeton High School), Sam Mattis (2011-12, East Brunswick High School), Nick Vena (2010 - 11, 2009-10, 2008-09 & 2007-08, Morristown High School), and Craig Forsys (2006-2007, Colts Neck) 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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