

**Contact: Matt Schiffman (312-729-3672)**

**SMITHTOWN HIGH SCHOOL WEST STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE NEW YORK BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 20, 2014) — In its 29<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 Benjamin Bonhurst of Smithtown High School West as its 2013-14 Gatorade New York Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Bonhurst is the first Gatorade New York Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Smithtown High School West.

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 Bonhurst as New York'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, Bonhurst 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-4, 280-pound senior hurled the shot put a meet-record 67 feet, 3 inches and won the discus with a throw of 183-9 at the Division I state championship meet this spring. Bonhurst also took gold in the shot put at the New York Federation Championships, the Penn Relays and both the New Balance Nationals Indoor championships and the New Balance Nationals Outdoor championships. His state-championship effort in the shot ranked as the nation's No. 3 performance among prep competitors in 2014 at the time of his selection.

Bonhurst has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally assisting disabled young athletes.

"Ben has won every major event a high school athlete can win," said Smithtown West head coach Peter Schieck. "He does all the extra preparation it takes to succeed, and he always does his best when the competition is fierce. He's a big meet performer."

Bonhurst has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in track and field on scholarship at Florida 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.

Bonhurst joins recent Gatorade New York Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year J.J. Stallworth (2012-13, Connetquot High School), Nick Ryan (2011-12, Fayetteville-Manlius High School), Chad Noelle (2010 - 11, Greene Central High School), Mike Quercia (2009-10, Marcellus Senior), Will Cole (2008-09, Hamburg), Kyle Merber (2007-08, Half Hollow Hills West), and Walter Henning (2006-2007, St. Anthony's) 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).

###