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**POCA HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA 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 Christian Buckley of Poca High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade West Virginia Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Buckley is the first Gatorade West Virginia Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Poca 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 Buckley as West Virginia'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, Buckley 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-3, 235-pound junior won two two individual state championships at the Class AA state meet this spring and led the Dots to a seventh-place finish as a team. Buckley set a meet record by launching the shot put 59 feet, 7.5 inches, which ranked as the nation's No. 74 performance among prep competitors in 2014 at the time of his selection. He completed his double with a gold-medal in the discus (174-4). Undeclared in both throwing disciplines as a sophomore and junior, he is a two-time USATF National Junior Olympics Track & Field Championships All-American in the discus.

Buckley has maintained a weighted 4.13 GPA in the classroom. The president of the Poca High junior class and also a member of the student council, he has volunteered locally as a peer tutor and youth track coach.

"I have never had a kid as dedicated and motivated as Christian is," said John Bonecutter, head coach of Poca High. "He'll throw in two practices a day and then go to the YMCA and work out. He's just a real motivated kid."

Buckley 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.

Buckley joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Jacob Burcham (2012-13, 2011-12 & 2010 - 11, Cabell Midland High School), Brandon Franklin (2009-10, Liberty), Zach Tennant (2008-09, North Marion), Eric Myers (2007-08, Sissonville), and Terrell Martin (2006-2007, Hurricane) 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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