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**GILBERT HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE IOWA BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 19, 2015) — In its 30<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 Thomas Pollard of Gilbert High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Iowa Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Pollard is the first Gatorade Iowa Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Gilbert 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 Pollard as Iowa'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, Pollard 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 5-foot-10, 135-pound senior distance talent captured two individual state titles this spring, leading the Tigers to a second-place finish as a team at the Class 3A state meet. Pollard took first in the 1600-meter run with a meet-record time of 4:09.67 as well as the 3200 in 9:07.41. The state's two-time Gatorade Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, he also won the 3200 at the prestigious Midwest Distance Classic, breaking the tape in 8:56.06, and earned third place in the 1500 at the Nike Festival of Miles with a time of 3:52.80, which ranked as the nation's No. 12 performance among prep competitors in 2015 at the time of his selection.

Pollard has maintained a 4.11 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Gilbert High student council, he has volunteered locally at a food bank and homeless shelter.

"Thomas Pollard is always willing do the training to reach his goals and potential as a great runner, not only for himself but also for his teammates," said Gilbert High head coach Kevin Litchfield. "He is humble in his accomplishments on the track and encourages his teammates and all runners he competes against to be the best they can be."

Pollard has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete in cross country and track on scholarship at Iowa 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.

Pollard joins recent Gatorade Iowa Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Josh Evans (2013-14 & 2012-13, Linn-Mar High School), Conner Smock (2011-12, Lisbon High School), Kevin Lewis (2010-11, Ottumwa High School), Kyle Dunn (2009-10, Linn-Mar), Omet Kak (2008-09, North), Jarred Herring (2007-08, Burlington), and Matt Banse (2006-07, Starmont) 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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