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**LAFAYETTE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE LOUISIANA 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 Armand Duplantis of Lafayette High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Louisiana Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Duplantis is the third Gatorade Louisiana Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Lafayette 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 Duplantis as Louisiana'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, Duplantis 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-8, 126-pound freshman soared a meet-record 16 feet, nine inches to win the pole vault at the Class 5A state championship meet this spring. Duplantis also shattered the national freshman record with his season-best clearance of 17-4, which ranked as the nation's No. 4 performance among prep competitors in 2015 at the time of his selection. He finished second in the pole vault at the Texas Relays, took third at the Great Southwest Classic and won the event indoors at the Millrose Games. Last summer, Duplantis captured the pole vault title at the USATF Junior Olympic Track & Field National Championships.

Duplantis has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of youth track athletes.

"Duplantis is just a monster who's probably going to break every record out there," said Shane LeLeux, owner of New Heights Gym. "He's very fast on the runway and has no inhibitions; he just goes for it. He's been a student of the sport his whole life, and there's no limit to how high he can go." Duplantis will begin his sophomore 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.

Duplantis joins recent Gatorade Louisiana Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Devin King (2013-14, Jewel M. Sumner High School), Dylan Duvio (2012-13, John Curtis Christian School), Kavahra Holmes (2011-12 & 2010-11, Breaux Bridge High School), Andreas Duplantis (2009-10, Lafayette), Richard Sheldon (2008-09, Episcopal), Barrett Nugent (2007-08, North Vermillion), and Zedric Thomas (2006-07, New Iberia) 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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