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**PALMER RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE COLORADO BOYS TRACK & FIELD ATHLETE OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 24, 2016) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Caleb Ojennes of Palmer Ridge High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Colorado Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Ojennes is the first Gatorade Colorado Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Palmer Ridge 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 Ojennes as Colorado'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, Ojennes 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, 180-pound senior broke the tape in the 200-meter dash with a time of 21.55 seconds and the 400-meter dash in 46.71 at the Class 4A state meet this past season, leading the Bears to second place as a team. He also anchored the winning 4x400-meter relay squad (3:18.92) and took fifth in the 100-meter dash (11.07). His 400-meter dash clocking at the state meet ranked No. 13 among U.S. prep competitors in 2016 at the time of his selection.

Ojennes has maintained a 3.46 GPA in the classroom and represents one of the state's top academic candidates in meeting the Gatorade award's broad criteria. In addition to donating his time as a youth track instructor and as a fundraiser for his school's athletic department, he has volunteered locally on behalf of the Marian House Soup Kitchen and an adopt-a-family initiative for underprivileged families during the holidays. He has also donated his time to Tri-Lakes Cares, a community relief and support organization.

"He had more love for the sport than any other athlete I have ever coached or been around," said Palmer Ridge head coach Kelly Christensen. "He was a student of the game and always found a way to deliver elite results every time it was needed. Caleb will be missed by the school, his teammates and the coaching staff. Without his passion and desire to succeed, the Palmer Ridge track team would not have won the back-to-back state team titles that we did in 2014 and 2015."

Ojennes has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at the Indiana 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.

Ojennes joins recent Gatorade Colorado Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Blake Yount (2014-15, Smoky Hill High School), Kevin McClanahan (2013-14, Erie High School), Connor Turnage (2012-13, Highlands Ranch High School), Raymond Bozmans (2011-12, Fort Collins High School), Connor Winter (2010-11, Arapahoe High School), Trevor Brown (2009-10, Wasson High School), Mason Finley (2008-09 & 2007-08, Buena Vista High School), and Jeremy Rankin (2006-07, Overland High School) 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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