

**Contact: John Manzo (312-729-3656)**

**ORONO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MAINE BOYS TRACK & FIELD PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 22, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Jake Koffman of Orono High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Maine Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year. Koffman is the first Gatorade Maine Boys Track & Field Athlete of the Year to be chosen from Orono 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 Koffman as Maine'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, Koffman joins an elite alumni association of state track & field award-winners, including Lolo Jones (1997-98, Roosevelt High School, Iowa), Allyson Felix (2002-03, Los Angeles Baptist High School, Calif.), Robert Griffin III (2006-07, Copperas Cove High School, Texas), Grant Fisher (2013-14 & 2014-15, Grand Blanc High School, Mich.) and Candace Hill (2014-15, Rockdale County High School, Ga.).

The 6-foot-3, 245-pound senior won the shot put and the discus at the Class C state meet this past season, leading the Red Riots to the state championship as a team. Koffman hurled the shot put 55 feet, 2.75 inches and launched the discus 173-6, giving him four career state titles. He also won the discus at the New England Outdoor Championships with a throw of 59-0, while finishing second in the shot put. Koffman took bronze in the discus at the New Balance Nationals Outdoor, breaking his own state record with an effort of 199-1.

Koffman has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and youth sports programs. "Jake is quite likely the most intelligent athlete I have ever coached," said Orono coach Chris Libby. "He has an attention to the details of technique that rivals clinicians I have encountered."

Koffman has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to compete on an athletic scholarship at Stanford 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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Koffman joins recent Gatorade Maine Boys Track & Field Athletes of the Year Sam Rusak (2015-16, Scarborough High School), Isaiah Harris (2014-15, Lewiston High School), Daniel Curts (2013-14, Ellsworth High School), Jared Bell (2012-13, Deering High School), Matthew McClintock (2011-12, Madison Area Memorial High School), Jack Terwilliger (2010-11, Cheverus High School), Will Geoghegan (2009-10, Brunswick High School), Dan Smith (2008-09, Thornton Academy), David Slovenski (2007-08, Brunswick High School), and Miles Bartlett (2006-07, Lake Region High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Jake will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

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).

###