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**HAR-BER HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE ARKANSAS GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 13, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Valerie Reina of Har-Ber High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Arkansas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Reina is the first Gatorade Arkansas Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Har-Ber 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 racecourse, distinguishes Reina as Arkansas's best high school girls cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in January, Reina joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Ryan Hall (1999-00, 2000-01, Big Bear HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-2 junior raced to her second career Class 7A individual state championship this past season with a time of 18:30.8. A three-time First Team All-State selection, Reina was the fastest Arkansas runner at the Foot Locker South Regional championships, capturing 11th place in 17:46.

Reina has maintained a 3.51 GPA in the classroom. A member the National Honor Society, she has volunteered for multiple community-service organizations on behalf of her church youth group.

"Valerie Reina is a great young lady and she is obviously very talented in cross country and track," said Randall Ramaker, head coach of rival Bentonville High. "If I were going to choose one runner who really stood out above the rest, she would absolutely be the one."

Reina will begin her 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 ESPN RISE and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, 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.

Reina joins Gatorade Arkansas Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Erika Setzler (2009-10, Conway) and two-time winner Grace Heymsfield (2007-08 & 2008-09, Elkins) as athletes who have won the cross country award since its inception in 2007.

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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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