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**SACRED HEART ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE KENTUCKY 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 Emma Brink of Sacred Heart Academy as its 2010-11 Gatorade Kentucky Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Brink is the first Gatorade Kentucky Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Sacred Heart Academy.

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 Brink as Kentucky'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, Brink 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-10 senior raced to her fourth consecutive Class 5A individual state championship this past season with a time of 18:27.71, leading the Valkyries to second place as a team. The 2007-08 and 2009-10 Gatorade Kentucky Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year and the 2008-10 Gatorade Kentucky Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year, Brink captured fifth place at the Foot Locker South Regional championships in 17:25 to qualify for the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships, where she finished 40th in 20:08.

Brink has maintained a 3.82 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, the Spanish National Honor Society and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, she has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple charity-fundraiser initiatives and as a tutor for at-risk elementary school students.

"Emma Brink is one of a kind," said Sacred Heart Academy athletic director Donna Moir. "I don't think any of us could have imagined that she would have accomplished all of the things she's done in her four years here. She is truly amazing, not just as a runner but also as a student and citizen."

Brink has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at the University of North

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.

Three-time winner Brink joins Gatorade Kentucky Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Kaitlin Snapp (2008-09, Danville 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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