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**GRAND BLANC HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MICHIGAN 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 Gabrielle Anzalone of Grand Blanc High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Michigan Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Anzalone is the first Gatorade Michigan Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Grand Blanc 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 Anzalone as Michigan'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, Anzalone 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-7 senior earned All-American honors at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championship this past season, finishing 11th with a time of 17:46. Anzalone won titles at the Spartan Invitational, the Portage Invitational and the Jackson Invitational, and also took second at both the Div. I state championships (in 17:01.7) and the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships (17:25.1).

Anzalone has maintained a 3.97 GPA in the classroom. She has volunteered locally on behalf of an area soup kitchen and her school's peer mentoring program.

"Since she was a freshman, she's known what she wanted to do and she's worked really hard to accomplish it," said Grand Blanc head coach Carlos Benton. "She was hurt as a junior, but she didn't let that discourage her. That just motivated her more to succeed."

Anzalone has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at the University of Wisconsin beginning 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.

Anzalone joins Gatorade Michigan Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year two-time winner Megan Goethals (2008-09 & 2009-10, Rochester) and Katie Haines (2007-08, Rockford) 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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