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**SHEPHERD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MICHIGAN BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 20, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Caleb Rhynard of Shepherd High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Michigan Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Rhynard is the first Gatorade Michigan Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Shepherd 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 Rhynard as Michigan's best high school boys cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in January, Rhynard 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 6-foot senior raced to the Division 3 individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:26.9, leading the Bluejays to third place as a team. Rhynard finished 10th at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships in 15:12.4, and was 35th at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships. He also captured victories at the Portage Invitational, the Spartan Invitational, the Chippewa Hills Invitational, the Saranac Invitational, the Bath Invitational and the Don Baese Invitational.

Rhynard has maintained a 3.97 GPA in the classroom. A member of his school's student government, he has volunteered at local nursing homes and raised funds to benefit the American Cancer Society.

"Caleb is obviously an amazing runner, and he's also an awesome student," said Shepherd head coach Rick Cahoon. "But he's also one of the most humble and selfless athletes I've ever coached."

Rhynard remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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.

Rhynard joins Gatorade Michigan Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Michael Atchoo (2009-10, Troy), Stephen Walker (2008-09, H.H. Dow), and Maverick Darling (2007-08, Ovid-Elsie) 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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