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**ST. FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE MINNESOTA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 20, 2011) — In its 26<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Adam Zutz of St. Francis High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Zutz is the first Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from St. Francis 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 Zutz as Minnesota'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, Zutz 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-9, 130-pound senior captured second place at the 2010 Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships this past season with a time of 15:23.20. He followed that up by finishing 23rd at the 2010 Nike Cross Nationals Final in 16:50.6. A two-time First Team All-State selection, Zutz won the Class AA individual state championship, breaking the tape in 15:33.4, and claimed victory at the Roy Griak Invitational with a winning time of 15:52.6.

Zutz has maintained a 3.99 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, he is a devoted parishioner of his church community and has completed a service mission to Mexico, where he helped build new homes.

"Adam Zutz is an incredibly smart and coachable runner who knows how to get it done," said St. Francis High head coach Becky Hanson. "He spends a lot of time running by himself because no one can run with him."

Zutz remains undecided upon a college 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.

Zutz joins Gatorade Minnesota Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Aaron Bartnik (2009-10, Eden Prairie), Lukas Gemar (2008-09, Moorhead), and Jordan Carlson (2007-08, Rosemount) 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

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