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**ROCKHURST HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MISSOURI 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 Zach Herriott of Rockhurst High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Missouri Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Herriott is the first Gatorade Missouri Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Rockhurst 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 Herriott as Missouri'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, Herriott 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-3 junior raced to the Class 4 individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:30.47, leading the Hawklets to fifth place as a team. Herriott placed 12th at the Nike Cross Nationals Midwest Regional championships in 15:27.90. He captured first place at the Greg Wilson Classic, the Kansas City Metro Championships and the Class 4 Sectional 4 meet this past fall. He also placed third at the Rim Rock Farm High School Cross Country Classic, clocking the state's fastest time at the event. Herriott finished 26th at the 2009 Class 4 state meet as a sophomore.

Herriott has maintained a 3.92 GPA in the classroom. A member of two performance choirs at his school, he has annually volunteered more than 30 hours of community service on behalf of Rockhurst High in addition to donating his time as a peer tutor.

"Zach did not even race at state freshman year, sophomore year he got 26th, and now he's a state champion," said Rockhurst High head coach Michael Dierks. "He has improved by at least a minute each year, showing that he is never satisfied with simply being where he is, he always wants to get better. This drive that Zach has extends from his own performance to his teammates, where he is helping to instill a strong work ethic in our program. All in all, Zach is the epitome of a leader and a winner—done in a way that builds us up."

Herriott will begin his 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.

Herriott joins Gatorade Missouri Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Maksim Korolev (2009-10, Harrisonville), Kevin Colon (2008-09, Lee's Summit West), and Eric Fernandez (2007-08, Parkway West) 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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