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**KEARNEY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA 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 Jacob Olson of Kearney High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Nebraska Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Olson is the first Gatorade Nebraska Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Kearney 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 Olson as Nebraska'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, Olson 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-1, 145-pound junior raced to a Class A individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:04.3, finishing with the fastest time in all classifications and leading the Bearcats to second place as a team. A 2010 Nebraska Coaches Association Class A Super-State selection, Olson also won the Class A-4 district meet, breaking the tape in 16:24, and captured the Greater Nebraska Athletic Conference championship in 16:36.

Olson has maintained an A average in the classroom. A devoted member of his church community, he has volunteered on behalf of multiple community service initiatives in association with its youth group.

"Jacob Olson has a drive to succeed that you just can't teach," said Kearney High head coach Luke Garringer. "He is extremely coachable and always knows what to do in order to ensure that he improves."

Olson 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.

Olson joins Gatorade Nebraska Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year two-time winner Jarren Heng (2009-10 & 2008-09, Norfolk Catholic), and Jon Ronhovde (2007-08, Fremont) 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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