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PLAINVIEW HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE OKLAHOMA 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 Andrew Leahey of Plainview High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Leahey is the first Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Plainview 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 Leahey as Oklahoma'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, Leahey 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 senior raced to the Class 3A individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:21.00, leading the Indians to first place as a team. A four-time Class 3A All-State qualifier, Leahey placed 71st at the Nike Cross Nationals South Regional championships in 16:37.90. He captured first place at the Oklahoma State University Cowboy Jamboree Class 1A-3A race, the OK Runner Classic Class 2A-4A race, the Madill Invitational, the Velma-Alma Invitational, the Mustang Invitational Small School race, the Oklahoma Baptist University Pre-State Class 2A-3A race and the Class 3A regional meet in Lindsay. Leahey also placed second at the Marcus I Invitational in Texas and fourth at the Arkansas/Oklahoma All-Star meet, clocking the state's fastest time at both events.

Also a track standout, Leahey has maintained a 3.19 GPA in the classroom. A member of his school's Spanish Club and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, he has volunteered locally on behalf of the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, the March of Dimes, the Salvation Army, his church's youth group and Vacation Bible School, an animal shelter, a blood drive and a nursing home. Leahey has also donated his time as a youth running instructor and as part of multiple charitable road races.

"Everyone across the state knew him, and everyone across the state feared him—athletes and coaches," said Plainview High athletic director Johni Bell. "Not only is he a good endurance runner, but he's also a great sprinter. They knew they couldn't run him down at the end of a race. He has an awesome work ethic. When everyone else is through with practice, he does more."

Leahey 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.

Leahey joins Gatorade Oklahoma Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Toby Bothwell (2009-10, Westmoore), Taylor Monaghan (2008-09, Union), and Steven Baker (2007-08, Union) 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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