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**SHELDON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE OREGON 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 Matthew Melancon of Sheldon High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Melancon is the first Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Sheldon 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 Melancon as Oregon'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, Melancon 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-11 senior raced to the Class 6A individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:36. Melancon also won the Concordia/Puma Classic and the Midwestern/Southern Oregon Conference Championships, and finished 11th at the Foot Locker West Regional championships.

Melancon has maintained a 3.88 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally with youth running programs and has raised funds to benefit cancer research and the Children's Miracle Network.

"Matt's season ranks as the most prolific in school history," said Sheldon head coach Chris Yorges. "But he also served as a tremendous mentor for our youngest runners. He taught his teammates the value of goal setting, and showed them the work and sacrifice it takes to reach those goals."

Melancon has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at the University of Oregon beginning 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.

Melancon joins Gatorade Oregon Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Drew Jordan (2009-10, North Medford), Elliott Jantzer (2008-09, Phoenix), and Bryce Burgess (2007-08, Franklin) 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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