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**MONTGOMERY BELL ACADEMY STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE TENNESSEE 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 Michael Peters of Montgomery Bell Academy as its 2010-11 Gatorade Tennessee Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Peters is the first Gatorade Tennessee Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Montgomery Bell Academy.

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 Peters as Tennessee'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, Peters 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, 150-pound senior raced to the Division II AA individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:05.98, leading the Big Red to the state title as a team. The 2010 The Tennessean Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year, Peters was the fastest Tennessee competitor at the 2010 Nike Cross Nationals South Regional championships, finishing seventh in 15:24.7. He won the Metro Nashville Cross Country Championship in late October, breaking the tape in 16:12.

Peters has maintained a 3.51 GPA in the classroom. The vice president of his school's medical careers club and co-editor of the yearbook, he has volunteered locally at St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville.

"Michael is the hardest worker and the best runner on the best team in Tennessee," said Montgomery Bell head coach Roderick Russ. "He changed everyone's expectations about what was possible, both in practice and in competition. He makes everyone around him better, which is highly unusual in an individual sport like cross country."

Peters 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.

Peters joins Gatorade Tennessee Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Brandon Lord (2009-10, Baylor School), Bill Matthews (2008-09, Baylor School), and Sean Keveren (2007-08, Brentwood) 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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