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**CABELL MIDLAND HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA 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 Jacob Burcham of Cabell Midland High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade West Virginia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Burcham is the first Gatorade West Virginia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Cabell Midland 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 Burcham as West Virginia'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, Burcham 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-9, 130-pound sophomore raced to the Class AAA individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:12.16, leading the Knights to the state title as a team. A 2010 First Team All-State selection, Burcham was the fastest West Virginia runner at the Nike Cross Nationals Southeast Regional championships, capturing fifth place in 15:23.10. He also earned 16th place at the NXN Final, crossing the line in 16:44.9.

Burcham has maintained a 3.67 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a peer tutor and on behalf of multiple community-service initiatives in association with his church youth group.

"Jacob Burcham has been able to accomplish a lot of impressive things in a very short amount of time," said Cabell Midland head coach Chris Parsons. "He is a very self-motivated and driven distance runner."

Burcham will begin his junior 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.

Burcham joins Gatorade West Virginia Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year two-time winner Cody Pelliccioni (2009-10 & 2008-09, Morgantown), and Ryan Beabout (2007-08, Wheeling Park) 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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