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**DAVIES HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NORTH DAKOTA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 12, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN HS, today announced Tarin Lachowitz of Davies High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade North Dakota Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Lachowitz is the first Gatorade North Dakota Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Davies 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 Lachowitz as North Dakota's best high school girls cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in January, Lachowitz 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.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-5 senior raced a third consecutive Class A individual state championship this past season with a time of 14:16.70, leading the Bruins to their second straight state title as a team. The state's two-time returning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Lachowitz placed 15th for the second consecutive season at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships, in 18:47.76. She finished second at the 2008 Class A state meet as an eighth-grader and third in 2007 as a seventh-grader.

Also a track and field standout, Lachowitz has maintained a 3.95 GPA in the classroom. A member of her school's Key Club International chapter, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and National Honor Society, she has volunteered locally on behalf of her church's youth group and as a fundraiser for a service-mission trip to Jamaica.

"Not only is she an exceptional athlete, more importantly she's been a great leader for our team," said Davies High head coach Lisa Svaleson. "We really are blessed to have had her for the past five seasons. She's just such an awesome girl. Incredibly consistent. She's always there competing her best at big meets, but also helping her teammates. That's the really neat thing. She's shown her teammates how to be exceptional like herself."

Lachowitz has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at North Dakota State University 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 HS 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.

Lachowitz joins Gatorade North Dakota Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Alissa Mears (2008-09, West Fargo), and Lindsay Anderson (2007-08, Leeds) 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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