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**SEWARD HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE ALASKA BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 23, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Miles Knotek of Seward HS as its 2011-12 Gatorade Alaska Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Knotek is the first Gatorade Alaska Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Seward HS.

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 Knotek as Alaska'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, Knotek 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-10 junior raced to the Class 1-2-3A individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:23, leading the Seahawks to third place as a team. Knotek also won the Region 3 Championship meet, the Seward Invitational, the Nikisi Class Races and the ACS Class Challenge. He placed second at the Skyview Invitational.

Knotek has maintained a 3.96 GPA in the classroom. A peer tutor at his school, he has volunteered locally on behalf of youth track programs and a community garden project.

"Miles is determined in the heat of competition and resilient," said Seward head coach Dan Marshall. "He's willing to experiment with his race and not just rely on one universal strategy."

Knotek will begin his senior 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 ESPNHS 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.

Knotek joins Gatorade Alaska Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Silas Talbot (2010-11, Service High School), Jacob Kirk (2009-10, Grace Christian School), Trevor Dunbar (2008-09, 2007-08, Kodiak) 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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