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**TELLURIDE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE COLORADO 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 Ty Williams of Telluride HS as its 2011-12 Gatorade Colorado Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Williams is the first Gatorade Colorado Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Telluride 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 Williams as Colorado'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, Williams 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 his third consecutive Class 1A-2A individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:26.03, leading the Miners to fourth place as a team. Williams also won the St. Vrain Invitational, the Ron Keller Invitational, the Delta Invitational and the Region 4 championship. He was 12th at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships.

Williams has maintained a 3.30 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally assisting the elderly and has served as president of his county's 4-H club.

"As a coach, I couldn't dream of a better student-athlete to have on my team," said Telluride head coach Keith Hampton. "Much of what he's accomplished has come from his own personal drive and desire. In large part due to his efforts, the program has grown from nothing in 2008 to having nearly 30 kids out for the sport in 2011."

Williams remains undecided upon a collegiate 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 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.

Williams joins Gatorade Colorado Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Spencer Wenck (2010-11, Palmer Ridge High School), Scott Fauble (2009-10, Wheat Ridge), Evan Appel (2008-09, Dakota Ridge), and Kevin Williams (2007-08, D'Evelyn) 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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