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**GONZAGA COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA 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 Mike Crozier of Gonzaga College HS as its 2011-12 Gatorade District of Columbia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Crozier is the first Gatorade District of Columbia Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Gonzaga College 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 Crozier as District of Columbia'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, Crozier 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 senior finished 13th at the Nike Cross Nationals Final this past season, with a time of 15:41. Crozier won the Maryland/D.C. Private School championship in 15:58 and earned victories at the Mercersburg Invitational, the Salesianum Invitational and the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference Championships. He also finished second at the Jesuit Championships and fourth at the NXN Southeast Regional championships.

Crozier has maintained a 3.88 GPA in the classroom. A member of his school's student council, he has volunteered as a peer tutor and on behalf of local food drives.

"Mike has just continued to progress over the past two years and really led the way this year," said Gonzaga head coach John Ausema. "He's truly been a team-oriented runner. He's never attempted to take his training off in another direction or work out separately from everyone else."

Crozier 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.

Crozier joins Gatorade District of Columbia Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year John McGowan (2010-11, 2008-09, Sidwell Friends School), Tom Harrison (2009-10, St. Albans School) and Nick Bax (2007-08, St. Albans School) 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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