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**LINGANORE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE MARYLAND BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 23, 2012) — In its 27<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Braden Bruning of Linganore HS as its 2011-12 Gatorade Maryland Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Bruning is the first Gatorade Maryland Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Linganore 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 Bruning as Maryland'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, Bruning 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 the Class 3A individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:20.8, leading the Landers to second place as a team. A 2011 Washington Post First Team All-Metro selection, Bruning took eighth and was the fastest Maryland competitor at the Nike Cross Nationals Southeast Regional championships, crossing the line in 15:30.4.

Bruning has maintained a 4.33 weighted GPA in the classroom. A four-year member of his school's marching band and jazz ensemble, he has volunteered locally on behalf of the National Honor Society and his church youth group, recently completing a service-mission trip to New Orleans.

"Braden Bruning has made himself one of the premier runners in the Mid-Atlantic region," said Linganore High head coach Andres Wright. "At every juncture he motivated and encouraged our team to be better, treating all members with great respect."

Bruning 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.

Bruning joins Gatorade Maryland Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Chris Miller (2010-11, Northwest High School), Andrew Palmer (2009-10, Walt Whitman), Zach Sullivan (2008-09, Archbishop Spalding), and Joey Thompson (2007-08, Howard) 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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