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**CENTENNIAL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEVADA 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 Nick Hartle of Centennial HS as its 2011-12 Gatorade Nevada Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Hartle is the first Gatorade Nevada Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Centennial 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 Hartle as Nevada'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, Hartle 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 6-foot-1 senior raced to his second consecutive Class 4A individual state championship this past season with a time of 16:41, leading the Bulldogs to second place as a team. Hartle also earned victories at the Sunset Region Championships, the Canyon Cowboy Invitational, the Larry Burgess Las Vegas Invitational and the Labor Day Classic. He finished second at the Desert Twilight Festival and was third in the seeded race at the Stanford Invitational. Hartle won both Gatorade Nevada Cross Country Runner of the Year and Track & Field Athlete of the Year honors as a junior.

Hartle has maintained a 3.98 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society, he has volunteered locally on behalf of a charity thrift store and the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life.

"Nick has been an amazing team leader, helping us to two state titles and two runner-up finishes in four years," said Centennial head coach Mike McGuire. "He's gifted physically, but he also prepares extremely well and has always been willing to put in the hard work."

Hartle 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.

Hartle joins Gatorade Nevada Boys Cross Country Runners of the Wade Meddles (2009-10, 2008-09, Sierra Lutheran) and Bryan Tibaduiza (2007-08, Galena) 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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