

**Contact: Adam Woullard (312-729-3627)**

**BLUE VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE KANSAS BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 17, 2013) — In its 28<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Colton Donahue of Blue Valley High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Kansas Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Donahue is the first Gatorade Kansas Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Blue Valley High School.

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 Donahue as Kansas'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, Donahue 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 the Class 6A individual state championship this past season with a time of 15:22.40. The Bob Timmons Award winner as the top performer at the state meet, Donahue placed 14th at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships in 15:21, clocking the state's top time at the event. Donahue concluded the season unbeaten against Kansas competition, including a fourth-place finish at the Rim Rock Farm Classic. He captured sixth place at the 2011 Class 5A state meet as a junior.

Also a track standout, Donahue has maintained a 3.18 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered on behalf of the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life.

"Colton really improved this fall and left no doubt all season long that he was the best in Kansas," said Steve Underwood, DyeStat editor with Runnerspace.com. "The state hasn't had a lot of Foot Locker national qualifiers over the years from the very tough Midwest region, but Colton came very close."

Donahue 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 the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), 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.

Donahue joins Gatorade Kansas Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Jacob Morgan (2011-12, Washburn Rural High School), Evan Landes (2010-11, Mulvane High School), Roy Wedge (2009-10, Lawrence), PJ Greer (2008-09, Saint Thomas Aquinas), and Bryce Volz (2007-08, Bishop Carroll Catholic) 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 [www.gatorade.com/poy](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

###