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ST. BENEDICT'S PREP. STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE NEW JERSEY BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 17, 2013) — In its 28th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced **Edward Cheserek of St. Benedict's Prep.** as its **2012-13 Gatorade New Jersey Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year**. Cheserek is the second Gatorade New Jersey Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from St. Benedict's Prep.

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 Cheserek as New Jersey'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, Cheserek 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-8 senior won his second consecutive national title this past season at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships, with a time of 14:59. Cheserek also won the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championship in 15:21.8, and earned victories at the Essex County Championships, the Prep A state championships and the Eastern States race at the Manhattan Invitational.

Cheserek has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of a community soup kitchen.

"Edward has broken every record around, beating times set by guys who have been in the Olympics," said St. Benedict's coach Marty Hannon. "What he's accomplished is amazing. It's been like a dream come true. I hate to put a burden on kids, but the sky is really the limit for him."

Cheserek 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.

Cheserek joins Gatorade New Jersey Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Tim Ball (2011-12, Piscataway High School), Jim Rosa (2010-11), Joe Rosa (2009-10, West Windsor-Plainsboro High School North), Tyler Udland (2008-09, Millburn), and Brandon Jarrett (2007-08, St. Benedict's Prep) 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.

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