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**NORTH SCHUYLKILL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA 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 Brendan Shearn of North Schuylkill High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Shearn is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from North Schuylkill 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 Shearn as Pennsylvania'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, Shearn 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 raced to 21st nationally at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships, with a time of 15:44. Shearn finished second at the Class AA state championships in 16:04 and placed fourth at the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championships. He earned victories at the Briarwood Invitational, the Schuylkill League Championships and the District 11 Championships.

Shearn has maintained a 3.93 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of charity road races and Students Against Destructive Decisions.

"Brendan has been a great leader for our team," said North Schuylkill coach Frank Briggs. "He's been a dedicated runner for the past six years, and he's also an outstanding student in the classroom."

Shearn will attend the University of Pennsylvania this fall, where he will compete in cross country and track and field.

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.

Shearn joins Gatorade Pennsylvania Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Dustin Wilson (2011-12, Chestnut Hill Academy), Zach Hedba (2010-11, North Hills Senior High School), Brad Miles (2009-10, North Penn), Ben Furcht (2008-09, Lower Merion), and Mark Dennin (2007-08, Boyertown Area Senior) 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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