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**WAVERLY-SHELL ROCK HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE IOWA GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 10, 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 Anna Holdiman of Waverly-Shell Rock High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Holdiman is the first Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Waverly-Shell Rock 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 Holdiman as Iowa's best high school girls cross country runner. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year award to be announced in January, Holdiman 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.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.) and Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.).

The 5-foot-5 senior raced to the Class 3A individual state championship this past season with a time of 13:51 over the 4-kilometer course, breaking the tape 39 seconds ahead of her next-closest competitor. Holdiman finished seventh at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships to earn 2012 Second Team All-American honors. She also took sixth at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships and 10th at the Nike Cross Nationals Heartland Regional championships.

Holdiman has maintained a 3.62 GPA in the classroom. The co-president of her school's Students Against Destructive Decisions chapter, she has sponsored an African child through Compassion International and has volunteered locally as a mentor to an autistic child. She has also donated her time as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with her church youth group.

"Anna has always been focused and determined in her goals with running," said Kevin Kueker, head coach of Waverly-Shell Rock. "She has always been a student of the sport, wanting to learn what she can do to be better. Everything culminated with her having an incredible senior year."

Holdiman has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at Iowa State University beginning this fall.

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.

Holdiman joins Gatorade Iowa Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Rebekah Topham (2011-12, Griswold High School), Shelby Houlihan (2010-11, East High School), Katie Flood (2009-10, Dowling Catholic), Ashlie Decker (2008-09, Dowling Catholic), and Katie Flood (2007-08, Dowling 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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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