

Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

**WATERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE MAINE 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 Bethanie Brown of Waterville High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Maine Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Brown is the first Gatorade Maine Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Waterville 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 Brown as Maine'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, Brown 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 state's reigning Gatorade Girls Track & Field Athlete of the Year, Brown raced to the Class B individual state championship this past season with a time of 17:56.32, leading the Purple Panthers to sixth place as a team. Also the Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year as named by The Portland Press Herald/Maine Sunday Telegram, Kennebec Journal and the Morning Sentinel, the 5-foot-4 senior captured seventh place at the New England Cross Country Championships in 19:18.60 and finished 11th at the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championships in 18:42.3, clocking the state's fastest time at both events.

Also an aspiring poet, Brown has maintained a 4.27 weighted GPA in the classroom and ranks No. 1 in her graduating class. She has received her school's Renaissance Award, given to students who excel in academics, service and character on behalf of the national Renaissance Program. A Student Ambassador for incoming transfer pupils, Brown has also donated her time promoting science studies in local fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms.

"Bethanie distinguishes herself from her competition through her exceptional focus," said Waterville head coach Rob Stanton. "She sets very high goals and works relentlessly to achieve them."

Brown has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at the University of Connecticut 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.

Brown joins Gatorade Maine Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Abbey Leonardi (2011-12, 2010-11, 2009-10 & 2008-09, Kennebunk High School), and Anna Makaretz (2007-08, Yarmouth) 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.

###