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**LAKE BRADDOCK HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA 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 Sophie Chase of Lake Braddock High School in Burke as its 2012-13 Gatorade Virginia Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year. Chase is the first Gatorade Virginia Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Lake Braddock 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 Chase as Virginia'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, Chase 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 returning Gatorade Girls Cross Country Runner of the Year, Chase raced to a second consecutive Group AAA individual state championship this past season with a course-record time of 17:24, leading the Burke to the state title as a team. Also the two-time Runner of the Year as named by The Washington Post, the 5-foot-8 senior captured first place at the Foot Locker South Regional championships in 17:05 and placed sixth at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships in 17:41.5. She placed second and 11th, respectively, at those races as a junior.

Also an accomplished swimmer, Chase has maintained a 4.25 weighted GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating her time as a youth running coach and as a swim instructor as a certified lifeguard, she has volunteered on behalf of neighborhood cleanup efforts, the Special Olympics and the Girls on the Run non-profit organization to promote healthy lifestyle choices among youth student-athletes.

"Sophie really saved her best for last," said Steve Underwood, DyeStat editor for Runnerspace.com. "She's one of those that proves a girl can be a star as a freshman and still be her best as a senior. She proved she was not only the best in Virginia, but the entire region with her state and Foot Locker South triumphs. Then, even on a slightly off day, she was in the running for the Foot Locker national title until the end."

Chase has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at Stanford 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.

Chase joins Gatorade Virginia Girls Cross Country Runners of the Year Annie LeHardy (2010-11, Hidden Valley High School), Kathleen Stevens (2009-10, Blacksburg), Megan Marsico (2008-09, Glenvar) and Kathleen Lautzenheiser (2007-08, Midlothian) 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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