

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jason Belenke (312-729-3631)

MCHENRY COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE ILLINOIS BOYS CROSS COUNTRY RUNNER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (January 16, 2014) — In its 29th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Jesse Reiser of McHenry Community High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Illinois Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Reiser is the first Gatorade Illinois Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from McHenry Community 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 Reiser as Illinois'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, Reiser 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 6-foot, 140-pound junior raced to 13th place nationally with a time of 15:20 at the Nike Cross Nationals Final this past season. Reiser finished second at the Class AAA state meet in 14:22 and was runner-up at the NXN Midwest Regional championships in 16:11.1. He earned victories at the McHenry County Championships, the Crystal Lake South Invitational, the Peoria Invitational, the Palatine Regional Championships, the Fox Valley Conference Championships, the Wauconda Invitational and the Schaumburg Sectional Championships. Reiser also finished third at the Foot Locker Midwest Regional championships with a time of 15:11 and was 33rd at the national Foot Locker Cross Country Championships.

Reiser has maintained a 3.51 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Key Club, he has volunteered locally on behalf of youth running programs and community clean-up initiatives.

"Jesse is a role model on our team, leading by example and supporting others," said McHenry head coach Beth Czubik. "His passion and knowledge of the sport allow him to excel at any challenge he faces."

Reiser will begin his senior year of high school 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.

Reiser joins Gatorade Illinois Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Jack Keelan (2012-13, St. Ignatius College Prep.), Michael Clevenger (2011-12, MacArthur High School), Lukas Verzbicas (2010-11 & 2009-10, Carl Sandburg High School), Steve Sulkin (2008-09, York), and Chris Derrick (2007-08, Neuqua Valley) 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.

###