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**RUSH-HENRIETTA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE NEW YORK 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 Mickey Burke of Rush-Henrietta Senior High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade New York Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year. Burke is the first Gatorade New York Boys Cross Country Runner of the Year to be chosen from Rush-Henrietta Senior 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 Burke as New York'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, Burke 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, 130-pound senior raced to fourth place nationally at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships this past season with a time of 15:20. Burke won the Foot Locker Northeast Regional championships in 15:18.8 and also captured the McQuaid Invitational and the Section 5 championship. He finished third at the Class A state meet with a time of 15:07.3.

Burke has maintained a B-plus average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of the Natural Helper program, a service club at Rush-Henrietta High that assists the community and students in need.

"Mickey's mental toughness is what sets him apart," said Rush-Henrietta coach Mike Demay. "He doesn't get bothered by things that bother other runners. He doesn't dwell on defeats. He learns and he goes out the next time and does the best he can. He was heartbroken at the state meet, but he went out and ran as well as he possibly could have at Foot Locker."

Burke has verbally committed to an athletic scholarship at Syracuse 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.

Burke joins Gatorade New York Boys Cross Country Runners of the Year Nick Ryan (2012-13 & 2011-12, Fayetteville-Manlius High School), Edward Owens (2010-11, The Packer Collegiate Institute), Alex Deir (2009-10, Honeoye Falls-Lima), Joe Whelan (2008-09, Hamburg), and Patrick Dupont (2007-08, Fairport) 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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