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**SMYRNA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® DELAWARE BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 8, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Caleb Matthews of Smyrna High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Delaware Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Matthews is the third Gatorade Delaware Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Smyrna 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 field, distinguishes Matthews as Delaware's best high school boys basketball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year award to be announced in March, Matthews joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Karl-Anthony Towns (2012-13 & 2013-14, St. Joseph HS, N.J.), Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.) and Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.).

The 6-foot-3, 160-pound senior guard has led the Eagles to a 21-3 record and a berth in the Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association state semifinals, scheduled for March 8. Matthews is averaging 21.8 points, 8.5 rebounds and 4.7 assists per game while shooting 51.4 percent from inside the arc and 40.2 from 3-point range. A First-Team All-State selection a year ago after leading the Eagles to their first state title, Matthews will play in the state's Blue-Gold All-Star Game later this month.

In addition to serving as a referee with the youth program Upward Sports, Matthews volunteers locally as a camp counselor with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and on behalf of the M.O.T. Future Stars basketball camp. "He has taken on the best defender in most of his team's games, and has developed the ability to create his own shot, but also defer to a solid surrounding cast when necessary," said Sean Greene, WDEL/Delaware SportsZone Sports Director. "Matthews has one of the quickest releases I've seen in the state—you come to just assume his shots are going in."

Matthews has maintained a weighted 3.49 GPA in the classroom. He remains undecided upon a collegiate destination.

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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Matthews joins recent Gatorade Delaware Boys Basketball Players of the Year Kyson Rawls (2016-17, St. Georges Technical High School), Jordan Allen (2015-16, Dover High School), DeVaughn Mallory (2014-15, Polytech High School), Brian O'Neill (2013-14, Salesianum School), Sabri Thompson (2012-13, Sanford School), Eric Laster (2011-12, Polytech High School), Tim Massado (2010-11, St. Elizabeth High School), Corey Crawford (2009-10, Dover High School), Paul Reynolds (2008-09, Smyrna High School), Erique Gumbs (2007-08, Caravel Academy), and Jarrett Mann (2006-07, Middletown High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Caleb will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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 <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.

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