

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Julie Mason (412-561-1014)

**FALMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MAINE BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 18, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Stefano Mancini of Falmouth High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Maine Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Mancini is the third Gatorade Maine Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Falmouth 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 court, distinguishes Mancini as Maine'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, Mancini joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Chris Paul (2002-03, West Forsyth HS, N.C.), Kevin Garnett (1992-93, Maudlin HS, S.C.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.), Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.) and Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas).

The 6-foot-2 senior guard led the Yachtsmen (21-1) to the Class B state tournament title this past season, averaging 22.5 points, 3.8 assists, 3.5 rebounds and 2.6 steals per game. Also a 2009-10 Mr. Basketball finalist, Mancini recorded 27 points, six rebounds, three assists, three steals and one block in a 72-65 overtime victory against Camden in the Class B state championship game, capturing tournament Most Valuable Player honors in the process. A 2010 Maine McDonald's High School Senior All-Star Basketball Game selection, he concluded his career with 1,281 points.

Also a standout football player, Mancini has maintained an A-minus average in the classroom. In addition to donating his time as a youth basketball instructor, he has mentored elementary school students as part of his school's Big Buddies program and Falmouth High's Drug Awareness Group of Students.

"Stefano Mancini has been an integral member of our highly successful boys' basketball team," said Falmouth Head Coach Dave Halligan. "A great deal of that success in recent years is directly attributable to the skills, desire and positive attitude that he has brought to our program. His overall enthusiasm for what he is doing is refreshing."

Mancini 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 ESPN RISE and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, 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.

Mancini joins recent Gatorade Maine Boys Basketball Players of the Year Thomas Knight (2008-09, Dirigo), Ryan Martin (2007-08, Maranacook Community), and Troy Barnies (2006-07, Edward Little) among the state's list of former award winners.

To celebrate the award's 25th anniversary, Gatorade wants you to vote for the All-Time Greatest Players of the Year at gatorade.com/POY25. 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.

###