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**CHADRON HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® NEBRASKA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 18, 2010) — In its 25<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Elliott Eliason of Chadron High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Nebraska Boys Basketball Player of the Year.

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 Eliason as Nebraska'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, Eliason 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 state's returning Gatorade Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Eliason led the Cardinals (24-3) to a second consecutive Class C-1 state title game this past season, averaging 17.7 points, 10.2 rebounds, 4.2 blocks, 2.9 assists and 1.1 steals per game. A returning First Team All-Nebraska selection as named by the *Omaha World-Herald*, the 6-foot-11, 240-pound senior center totaled 14 points, seven rebounds and six blocks in the Class C-1 state championship game, but Chadron fell to Hastings Saint Cecilia, 46-40.

Eliason has maintained a 3.67 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Future Business Leaders of America, he has volunteered locally in association with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and as part of a canned food drive on behalf of his church's youth group.

"He is unselfish and will set aside his personal gains for the success of the team," said Chadron Head Coach Craig Nobiling. "He is such a great passer and has very good vision. Obviously, his height helps with that. His defense is what helped us the most. Very few teams take the ball to the basket because of his presence alone. We will miss him greatly."

Eliason has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Minnesota 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 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.

Eliason joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Boys Basketball Player of the Year Wes Eikmeier (2007-08 & 2006-07, Archbishop Bergan Catholic) among the state's list of former award winners.

To celebrate the award's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Gatorade wants you to vote for the All-Time Greatest Players of the Year at [gatorade.com/POY25](http://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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com).

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