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**ST. PATRICK HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® NEW JERSEY 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 Kyrie Irving of St. Patrick High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Irving is the second Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from St. Patrick 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 Irving as New Jersey'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, Irving 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-1 senior guard led the Celtics (26-3) to a No. 8 ranking nationally in the ESPN RISE Fab 50 this past season, averaging 24.5 points, 6.5 assists, 4.5 rebounds and 3.5 steals per game. A finalist for both the Naismith High School Player of the Year and the Morgan Wootten Player of the Year awards, Irving was selected to play in the Jordan Brand Classic and the McDonald's High School All-American games. He's ranked as the No. 4 senior in the nation by ESPN RISE and is a member of the 2010 USA Basketball Junior National Select Team.

Irving has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of youth sports programs and food drives to benefit the needy, and has served as a tutor in his school.

"He's smooth and dominant, and everything he does is effortless," said Bob Hurley, head coach of rival St. Anthony High. "He gets his teammates involved in the game, then takes over when he needs to."

Irving has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on scholarship at Duke University 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.

Irving joins recent Gatorade New Jersey Boys Basketball Players of the Year Michael Gilchrist (2008-09, St. Patrick), Samardo Samuels (2007-08, St. Benedict's Prep), and Corey Fisher (2006-07, St. Patrick) 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.

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