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**WICHITA HEIGHTS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® KANSAS BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 17, 2011) — In its 26th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Perry Ellis of Wichita Heights High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Kansas Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Ellis is the first Gatorade Kansas Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Wichita Heights 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 Ellis as Kansas'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, Ellis joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), 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 two-time returning Gatorade Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Ellis led the Falcons to a 25-0 record and a third consecutive Class 6A state championship this past season. The 6-foot-8, 220-pound junior power forward averaged 22.1 points, 7.9 rebounds, 1.8 assists and 0.9 blocks per game. Also a two-time returning Class 6A First Team All-State selection as named by the Kansas Basketball Coaches Association, he shot 74.9 percent from the field, 33.3 percent from 3-point range and 71.7 percent from the free-throw line. A member of the 2010 USA Basketball Men's Developmental National Team, Ellis produced 22.2 points, 10.4 rebounds, 1.6 assists, 1.2 blocks and 1.1 steals per contest as a junior. He recorded 19.2 points and 11.7 rebounds per game as a freshman.

Ellis has maintained a 4.00 GPA in the classroom and ranks No. 1 in his graduating class. In addition to donating his time as a youth basketball instructor, he has volunteered locally as part of multiple youth literacy-outreach initiatives and as a motivational speaker for young student-athletes, addressing the importance of education and positive thinking. He has also served on behalf of the Wichita Children's Home.

"He's a three-time Gatorade Player of the Year winner, that's extremely impressive because of the criteria you have to meet to do that," said Paul Biancardi, National Director for ESPN Basketball Recruiting. "It speaks volumes about his abilities on the court and his character off it. He's a strong, physical power forward who can score on the blocks. He has increased his ability to play facing the basket out to 15 feet. He's a low-post and high-post threat and a good rebounder on both ends of the floor."

Ellis will begin his senior year of high school 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.

Three-time winner Ellis joins 2007-2008 Gatorade Kansas Boys Basketball Player of the Year Travis Releford (Bishop Miege), among the state's list of former award winners.

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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