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HOPKINS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED GATORADE® MINNESOTA 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 Joe Coleman of Hopkins High School as its 2010-11 Gatorade Minnesota Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Coleman is the third Gatorade Minnesota Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Hopkins 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 Coleman as Minnesota'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, Coleman 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 6-foot-4, 200-pound senior swingman led the Royals to a 27-1 record and a berth in the Class 4A state quarterfinals, scheduled for March 24. Coleman is averaging 21.5 points, 5.9 rebounds, 1.8 assists and 1.7 steals per game, shooting 65.6 percent from the field, 26.1 percent from 3-point range and 67.0 percent from the free-throw line. A returning First Team All-State selection as named by *The Associated Press*, he averaged 24.7 points per game as a junior in 2010, leading the Royals (30-2) to a second consecutive Class 4A state title and capturing All-Tournament Team honors for the second straight winter.

Coleman has maintained a 3.20 GPA in the classroom. In addition to serving as a member of his school's leadership and captains' councils, he has donated his time as a youth basketball instructor.

"He's a premier player and a major talent," said Rene Pulley, Executive Director of the Howard Pulley Basketball Program, an elite club team organization. "He has major college athleticism. When somebody plays above the rim as he does, that separates him. He can jump out of the gym, get to the basket and he's a phenomenal scorer. And you won't find a better person. He's done everything a person should do in the classroom, and he's a very, very good kid."

Coleman 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.

Coleman joins recent Gatorade Minnesota Boys Basketball Players of the Year Kevin Noreen (2009-10, Minnesota Transitions Charter School), Mike Bruesewitz (2008-09, Henry Sibley), and Jordan Taylor (2007-08, Benilde-St. Margaret's), 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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