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**EDISTO HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® SOUTH CAROLINA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 22, 2012) — In its 27th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPNHS, today announced Brice Johnson of Edisto High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade South Carolina Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Johnson is the first Gatorade South Carolina Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Edisto 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 Johnson as South Carolina'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, Johnson 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-9, 205-pound senior forward and center averaged 25.4 points, 14.3 rebounds, 8.3 blocks and three assists per game this past season, leading the Cougars (15-5) to the second round of the Class 2A state tournament. Also 2010-11 Gatorade South Carolina Boys Basketball Player of the Year, Johnson is the No. 30 ranked recruit in the Class of 2012 as rated by ESPNU.

Johnson has maintained a 3.53 in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, he has volunteered locally as a teaching assistant and as an audio-visual technician at his church.

"Brice Johnson is a very motivated, energetic, determined and goal-driven young man," said Bruce Beasley, head coach at Beaufort High. "He is an extremely hard worker on the court and in the classroom. What impresses me most about him his is basketball IQ, court awareness and knowledge of the game."

Johnson has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at the University of North Carolina 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 ESPNHS 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.

Two-time winner Johnson joins Gatorade South Carolina Boys Basketball Players of the Year RJ Slawson (2009-10, Fort Dorchester), Milton Jennings (2007-08 & 2008-09, Pinewood Preparatory School), and Trevor Deloach (2006-07, Saluda) 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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