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**T.F. RIGGS HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® SOUTH DAKOTA 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 Zach Hanson of T.F. Riggs High School as its 2011-12 Gatorade South Dakota Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Hanson is the first Gatorade South Dakota Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from T.F. Riggs 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 Hanson as South Dakota'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, Hanson 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 junior forward led the Governors to an 18-8 record and third place in the Class AA state tournament this past season. Hanson averaged 17.3 points, 7.7 rebounds and 1.9 blocks per game. A Second Team All-State selection as a sophomore, he's twice been named First Team All-Conference.

Hanson has maintained a 3.19 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of a youth mentoring program.

"Hanson's motor never stops," said Brent Norberg, head coach at Aberdeen Central High. "He's got multiple moves, he can finish with both hands and he can shoot dependably from 15 to 16 feet. If he was three inches shorter, he'd still be a great player."

Hanson 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 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.

Hanson joins recent Gatorade South Dakota Boys Basketball Players of the Year Zach Horstman (2010-11, Winner High School), Jared Hannigan (2009-10, Central), Tony Fiegen (2008-09, Madison High School), Louie Krogman (2007-08, White River High School), and Dale Moss (2006-07, Brandon Valley) 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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