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**CORONA DEL SOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® ARIZONA BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 21, 2013) — In its 28<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Casey Benson of Corona del Sol High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade Arizona Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Benson is the third Gatorade Arizona Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Corona del Sol 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 Benson as Arizona'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, Benson 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-3, 180-pound junior guard led the Aztecs to a 29-4 record and the Division I state title this past season. Benson averaged 20.7 points, 3.7 assists, 3.3 assists and 1.4 steals per game while shooting 57 percent from inside the arc. The 2013 Arizona Republic Player of the Year, he scored 12 points, pulled down eight rebounds and dished six assists in a 63-59 win over Pinnacle in the state final.

Benson has maintained a 3.93 GPA in the classroom. A devoted parishioner in his church community, he has donated his time as a prayer group leader and has volunteered locally on behalf of multiple community service initiatives in association with his church youth group.

"In addition to being a tremendous player, Casey Benson is a true leader and very coachable," said Corona del Sol head coach Sam Duane. "He is very competitive and he makes players around him better. He does not care about individual stats and only cares about what it takes to win."

Benson 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 the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), 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.

Benson joins recent Gatorade Arizona Boys Basketball Players of the Year Tim Derksen (2011-12, Amphitheater High School), Jordan Baker (2010-11, Tempe High School), Corey Hawkins (2009-10 & 2008-09, Estrella Foothills), Taylor Rohde (2007-08, Pinnacle High School), and Jerryd Bayless (2006 - 07, St. Mary'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 [www.gatorade.com/poy](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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