

Contact: Lauren Rollins (312-729-3607)

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

CHICAGO (March 21, 2013) — In its 28th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Justin McKie of Irmo High School as its 2012-13 Gatorade South Carolina Boys Basketball Player of the Year. McKie is the first Gatorade South Carolina Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Irmo 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 McKie 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, McKie 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, 180-pound senior guard led the Yellow Jackets to a 29-0 record and the Class 4A state championship this past season. McKie averaged 18 points, 4.5 rebounds, 3.5 assists and 1.8 steals per game while shooting 80 percent from the free throw line. South Carolina's 2013 Mr. Basketball, he scored 20 points with 10 rebounds in a 65-46 win over Goose Creek in the Class 4A state final.

McKie has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics, as part of an elementary school literacy-outreach initiative and as a summer basketball camp counselor.

"Justin McKie has a competitive edge and a fire that you don't see every day," said Thomas Ryan, head coach at Dorman High. "He's one of those kids who's actually fun to coach against because he always plays the game the right way."

McKie has signed a National Letter of Intent to play basketball on an athletic scholarship at the University of South 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 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.

McKie joins recent Gatorade South Carolina Boys Basketball Players of the Year Brice Johnson (2011-12 & 2010-11, Edisto High School), RJ Slawson (2009-10, Fort Dorchester), Milton Jennings (2008-09 & 2007-08, 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 www.gatorade.com/poy.

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