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**EAGLECREST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® COLORADO BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 20, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Colbey Ross of Eaglecrest High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Colorado Boys Basketball Player of the Year. Ross is the first Gatorade Colorado Boys Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Eaglecrest 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 Ross as Colorado'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, Ross joins an elite alumni association of past state boys basketball award winners, including Karl-Anthony Towns (2012-13 & 2013-14, St. Joseph HS, N.J.), Dwight Howard (2003-04, SW Atlanta Christian Academy, Ga.), Chris Bosh (2001-02, Lincoln HS, Texas), Paul Pierce (1994-95, Inglewood HS, Calif.), Chauncey Billups (1993-94 & 1994-95, George Washington HS, Colo.) and Jason Kidd (1991-92, St. Joseph Notre Dame HS, Calif.).

The state's returning Gatorade Player of the Year, the 6-foot-1, 175-pound senior guard led the Raptors to a 24-4 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Ross averaged 18.4 points, 5.0 assists, 4.9 rebounds and 2.4 steals per game. A two-time Centennial League Player of the Year, he was a First Team All-State selection as a junior.

Ross has volunteered locally as part of a fundraising campaign to benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation and as a youth basketball coach. "Colbey plays hard and has a high basketball IQ," said Morgan Gregory, head coach of Cherokee Trail High. "He understands the flow of the game and when he needs to be aggressive for his team, along with knowing when to get others involved."

Ross has maintained a weighted 3.51 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at Pepperdine University beginning 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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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 Ross joins Gatorade Colorado Boys Basketball Players of the Year Brian Carey (2014-15, Denver East High School), Dominique Collier (2013-14 & 2012-13, Denver East High School), Josh Scott (2011-12, Lewis-Palmer High School), Brett Olson (2010-11, Highlands Ranch High School), Bud Thomas (2009-10 & 2008-09, Regis Jesuit High School), Reggie Jackson (2007-08, Palmer High School), and Levi Knutson (2006-07, Arapahoe High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Colbey will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

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.