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## **Greg Oden Named Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year**

*Indianapolis hoops star is award's fifth two-time winner*

CHICAGO (April 3, 2006) — Entering its third decade of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade® Thirst Quencher, in partnership with Scholastic's *Coach & Athletic Director Magazine*, today announced Greg Oden of Lawrence North High School in Indianapolis, Ind., as its 2005-06 Gatorade National Boys Basketball Player of the Year.

Oden, who won the award in 2004-05 as well, joins LeBron James of the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers as the only two-time Gatorade National Boys Basketball Players of the Year. Overall, Oden is the fifth high school athlete to win multiple Gatorade National Player of the Year awards, joining James, track & field's Marion Jones, University of Tennessee women's basketball star Candace Parker and Stanford University volleyball standout Cynthia Barboza (see list below).

Oden, a 7-foot-½-inch senior, averaged 22.0 points and 10.5 rebounds per game while shooting 74 percent from the field this season. He led Lawrence North to a 29-0 record, a third straight Indiana Class 4A state title and the No. 1 spot in the final USA TODAY Super 25 rankings. Lawrence North's average margin of victory this season was 21 points, capped by an 80-56 state championship game victory in which Oden posted game-highs of 26 points and 11 rebounds.

Oden, a four-year starter, helped Lawrence North carve out its place in Indiana high school basketball history. It became the third school in state history to win three consecutive state titles, joining Franklin High School (1920-22) and Marion High School (1985-87). Its undefeated season also ran Lawrence North's win streak to 45 games, tying the state record set 50 years ago by Crispus Attucks High School, a team led by Basketball Hall of Famer Oscar Robertson.

Oden's standard of excellence extends to the classroom where he has a 3.62 GPA and has been an honor roll student throughout high school – including high academic honors the past two years. The Indiana State High School Athletic Association recently presented him with the Arthur L. Trester Award for Mental Attitude, given to the outstanding senior participant in the boys' basketball state finals who excels in mental attitude, scholarship, leadership and athletic ability.

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Oden plans to attend The Ohio State University in the fall, where he will headline what most recruiting experts are tabbing as the nation's top recruiting class.

"Greg is a true gentleman and an outstanding student," says Lawrence North head coach Jack Keefer. "He enjoys school and the challenges it offers him. He is also one of the hardest working players I have ever coached. With an incredible amount of talent, drive, and a mind that allows him to stay humble and keep working to get better, Greg is a true warrior."

"Without question, Greg is deserving of recognition as the nation's best high school boys basketball player based on his performance and the tremendous ability he's demonstrated," said Gatorade Senior Vice President of Sports Marketing Tom Fox. "But he is also a shining example to peers and aspiring young players of what a leader and a student-athlete should be. He represents everything we hope for in a Gatorade Player of the Year recipient."

The Gatorade Player of the Year program recognizes one winner in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and awards one National Player of the Year in five boys sports (football, soccer, basketball, baseball, track & field) and five girls sports (volleyball, soccer, basketball, softball, track & field). In addition to athletic performance, award criteria include the achievement in the classroom and overall character. Previous Gatorade National Player of the Year award winners include:

- NFL all-time leading rusher Emmitt Smith
- Two-time NFL Most Valuable Player Peyton Manning
- Reigning American League Most Valuable Player Alex Rodriguez
- Captain of the U.S. men's national soccer team Claudio Reyna
- 2004 MLS Cup MVP Alecko Eskandarian
- WNBA all-time leading scorer and rebounder Lisa Leslie
- Beach volleyball gold medalist Kerri Walsh
- Reigning 200-meter world champion Allyson Felix

For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information and lists of past winners and future announcement dates, visit [www.gatorade.com/playeroftheyear](http://www.gatorade.com/playeroftheyear).

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## PAST GATORADE NATIONAL BOYS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR HONOREES

Year	Name	High School	Status
2005-06	Greg Oden	Lawrence North/Indianapolis, IN	High School Senior
2004-05	Greg Oden	Lawrence North/Indianapolis, IN	High School Senior
2003-04	Dwight Howard	SW Atlanta Christian Academy/Atlanta, GA	Orlando Magic
2002-03	LeBron James	St. Vincent-St. Mary/Akron, OH	Cleveland Cavaliers
2001-02	LeBron James	St. Vincent-St. Mary/Akron, OH	Cleveland Cavaliers
2000-01	Kelvin Torbert	Northwestern Edison/Flint, MI	Michigan State U. Grad.
1999-00	Jared Jeffries	North/Bloomington, IN	Washington Wizards
1998-99	LaVell Blanchard	Pioneer/Ann Arbor, MI	U. of Michigan Grad.
1997-98	Al Harrington	St. Patrick/Elizabeth, NJ	Atlanta Hawks
1996-97	Baron Davis	Crossroads/Santa Monica, CA	Golden State Warriors
1995-96	Kobe Bryant	Lower Merion/Ardmore, PA	Los Angeles Lakers
1994-95	Stephon Marbury	Abraham Lincoln/Brooklyn, NY	New York Knicks
1993-94	Felipe Lopez	Rice/New York, NY	Retired from NBA
1992-93	Randy Livingston	Isidore Newman School/New Orleans, LA	Chicago Bulls
1991-92	Corliss Williamson	Russellville/Russellville, AR	Sacramento Kings
1990-91	Chris Webber	Detroit County Day/Birmingham, MI	Philadelphia 76ers
189-90	Damon Bailey	Bedford North Lawrence/Bedford, IN	Retired from NBA
1988-89	Kenny Anderson	Archbishop Molloy/Jamaica, NY	Retired from NBA
1987-88	Alonzo Mourning	Indian River/Chesapeake, VA	Miami Heat
1986-87	LaBradford Smith	Bay City/Bay City, TX	Retired from NBA
1985-86	J.R. Reid	Kempsville/Virginia Beach, VA	Retired from NBA

## GATORADE NATIONAL PLAYER OF THE YEAR – MULTIPLE AWARD WINNERS

Years	Name	High School	Sport
1990-91, 1991-91, 1992-93	Marion Jones	Thousand Oaks/Thousand Oaks, CA	Girls Track & Field
2001-02, 2002-03	LeBron James	St. Vincent-St. Mary/Akron, OH	Boys Basketball
2002-03, 2003-04	Candace Parker	Naperville Central/Naperville, IL	Girls Basketball
2003-04, 2004-05	Cynthia Barboza	Wilson Classical/Long Beach, CA	Volleyball
2004-05, 2005-06	Greg Oden	Lawrence North/Indianapolis, IN	Boys Basketball