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**GATORADE® NATIONAL BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR:
RYAN WEATHERS**

Longtime MLB Pitcher and Father David Weathers Surprises Winner with Honor

Loretto, TN. (May 31, 2018) – In its 33rd year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Ryan Weathers of Loretto High School (Loretto, TN) as its 2017-18 Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year. MLB veteran, David Weathers, surprised his son with the award while pretending to tow his car from the high school parking lot.

Check out the surprise video [here](#).

“Ryan Weathers spots all of his pitches effectively, and his fastball plays up with heavy sinking action,” says Baseball America National Writer Carlos Collazo. “He’s got big-league bloodlines, thanks to his dad, and a well-rounded arsenal. His professionalism is apparent immediately when you watch him on the mound. He’s very even-keeled and calm, and has an advanced understanding of what he’s trying to do as a pitcher. In a time when many talented arms are more “throwers” than “pitchers,” he’s attacking hitters with a plan.”

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Weathers as the nation’s best high school baseball player. A national advisory panel comprised of sport-specific experts and sports journalists helped select Ryan from nearly 470,000 high school baseball players nationwide. Ryan is now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade Male High School Athlete of the Year award, to be presented at a special ceremony prior to The ESPY Awards in July.

The 6-foot-2, 220-pound senior left-handed pitcher, first baseman and outfielder, compiled a 10-0 record with a 0.09 earned run average this past season, leading the Mustangs (33-4) to the Division I, Class A state championship game. Weathers struck out 148 batters in 76 innings pitched, allowing just 24 hits and 10 walks. At the plate, he posted a .434 batting average with nine doubles, five home runs, 31 runs scored and 26 runs batted in. He also produced a .559 on-base-percentage and a .747 slugging percentage for an OPS of 1.306. The 2017 Tennessee Baseball Coaches Association Mr. Baseball winner, he won a gold medal with Team USA at the 2017 U-18 World Cup in Canada.

Weathers has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Vanderbilt this fall, but is projected as an early round selection in June’s Major League Baseball draft.

“Without question, Ryan is deserving of recognition as the nation’s best high school baseball player based on his statistics on the field and the impact his accomplishments have had on Loretto’s success,” said Gatorade Senior Vice President and General Manager Brett O’Brien. “But he is also a shining example to peers and aspiring young athletes of what a leader and a student-athlete should be. He represents everything we hope for in a Gatorade Player of the Year recipient.”

As a part of Gatorade’s cause marketing platform “Play it Forward,” Weathers also has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of his choosing. He is also eligible to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for his organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

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 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.

Former notable Gatorade National Players of the Year include:

- Super Bowl Most Valuable Player Peyton Manning
- 2015 NBA first overall pick Karl-Anthony Towns
- Three-time WNBA champion Maya Moore
- Seven-time track & field gold medalist Allyson Felix
- Three-time beach volleyball gold medalist Kerri Walsh
- Three-time Cy Young Award winner Clayton Kershaw

For more information on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of former winners, and future announcement dates, visit the Gatorade Player of the Year Web site at <http://www.gatorade.com/poy>, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

ALL-TIME GATORADE NATIONAL BASEBALL PLAYERS OF THE YEAR

YEAR	NAME	HIGH SCHOOL	STATUS
2016-17	MacKenzie Gore	Whiteville HS, Whiteville, NC	San Diego Padres Org.
2015-16	Kyle Muller	Jesuit College Preparatory School, Dallas, TX	Atlanta Braves Org.
2014-15	Luken Baker	Oak Ridge HS, Oak Ridge, TX	Texas Christian University
2013-14	Justus Sheffield	Tullahoma, Tullahoma, TN	New York Yankees Org.
2012-13	Clint Frazier	Logansville HS, Logansville, GA	New York Yankees Org.
2011-12	Lance McCullers	Jesuit, Tampa, FL	Houston Astros
2010-11	Dylan Bundy	Owasso, Owasso, OK	Baltimore Orioles
2009-10	Kaleb Cowart	Cook, Adel, GA	Los Angeles Angels
2008-09	Matt Hobgood	Norco, Norco, CA	Free Agent
2007-08	Kyle Skipworth	Patriot, Riverside, CA	Free Agent
2006-07	Rick Porcello	Seton Hall Prep, West Orange, NJ	Boston Red Sox
2005-06	Clayton Kershaw	Highland Park, Dallas, TX	Los Angeles Dodgers
2004-05	Justin Upton	Great Bridge, Chesapeake, VA	Los Angeles Angels
2003-04	Mark Rogers	Mt. Ararat, Topsham, ME	Milwaukee Brewers
2002-03	Chris Lubanski	Kennedy-Kenrick, Norristown, PA	Retired from MLB
2001-02	Zack Greinke	Apopka, Apopka, FL	Arizona Diamondbacks
2000-01	Casey Kotchman	Seminole, Seminole, FL	Free Agent
1999-2000	Jason Stokes	Coppell, Coppell, TX	Retired from MLB
1998-99	B.J. Garbe	Moses Lake, WA	Retired from MLB
1997-98	Drew Henson	Brighton, Brighton, MI	Retired from MLB and NFL
1996-97	Darnell McDonald	Cherry Creek, Englewood, CO	Retired from MLB
1995-96	Matt White	Waynesboro, Waynesboro, PA	Retired from MLB
1994-95	Chad Hutchinson	Torrey Pines, San Diego, CA	Retired from MLB and NFL
1993-94	Doug Million	Sarasota, Sarasota, FL	Deceased
1992-93	Alex Rodriguez	Westminster Christian, Miami, FL	Retired from MLB
1991-92	A.J. Hinch	Midwest City, Midwest City, OK	Houston Astros Manager
1990-91	Brian Barber	Dr. Phillips, Orlando, FL	Retired from MLB
1989-90	Todd Van Poppel	James Martin, Arlington, TX	Retired from MLB
1988-89	Jeff Jackson	Simeon, Chicago, IL	Retired from MLB
1987-88	Mark Lewis	Hamilton, Hamilton, OH	Retired from MLB
1986-87	Willie Banks	St. Anthony's, Jersey City, NJ	Retired from MLB
1985-86	Gary Sheffield	Hillsborough, Tampa, FL	Retired from MLB

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