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**NORCO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® CALIFORNIA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Taylor Dockins of Norco High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade California Softball Player of the Year. Dockins is the second Gatorade California Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Norco 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 field, distinguishes Dockins as California's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Dockins joins an elite alumni association of past state softball award-winners, including Catherine Osterman (2000-01, Cy Spring High School, Texas), Kelsey Stewart (2009-10, Arkansas City High School, Kan.), Carley Hoover (2012-13 D.W. Daniel High School, S.C.), Jenna Lilley (2012-13, Hoover High School, Ohio), Morgan Zerkle (2012-13 Cabell Midland High School, W. Va.), and Rachel Garcia (2014-15, Highland High School, Calif.).

The 5-foot-5 senior right-handed pitcher had led the Cougars to a 32-0 record at the time of her selection. Dockins earned all of Norco's wins by posting a 0.85 earned run average, recording 179 strikeouts in 190 innings pitched thru 32 games. At the plate, Dockins owned a .462 batting average with seven doubles, 30 runs scored, 26 RBI and a .670 slugging percentage. A two-time Big VIII All-League MVP, she holds the Southern California record with 107 career wins in her prep softball career. She tied the Southern Section record with 32 straight wins and was one shy of matching the all-time season wins mark of 33 entering the state tournament final four.

Dockins had surgery to remove a five-inch cancerous tumor from her liver in July, 2016, and was hospitalized for 10 days battling a sepsis infection last October, but recovered in time to start for the Cougars on opening day, March 1. She has volunteered extensively with the local Make-A-Wish Foundation and the Los Angeles Children's Hospital Network, and donated her time as a youth softball coach. "Taylor's ability in the circle to hit her corners and change speeds keeps hitters off-balance consistently," said Krista Humphreys, head coach of Centennial High School. "She has great command of her pitches and is very poised on the mound."

Dockins has maintained a 3.12 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball on scholarship at Cal State-Fullerton 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.

Dockins joins recent Gatorade California Softball Players of the Year Madilyn "Bubba" Nickles (2015-16, Merced High School), Rachel Garcia (2014-15 & 2012-13, Highland High School), Taylor McQuillin (2013-14, Mission Viejo High School), Emily Lockman (2011-12, Norco High School), Cheyenne Cordes (2010-11, Rodriguez High School), Jessica Hall (2009-10, Ayala High School), Keilani Ricketts (2008-09, Archbishop Mitty High School), Jessica Spigner (2007-08, Valencia High School), and Jordan Taylor (2006-07, Valencia High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Taylor 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 the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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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