

## COLLEYVILLE HERITAGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE TEXAS BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

**CHICAGO** (May 23, 2019) — In its 34<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced **Bobby Witt Jr. of Colleyville Heritage High School** as its **2018-19 Gatorade Texas Baseball Player of the Year**. Witt Jr. is the second Gatorade Texas Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Colleyville Heritage 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 Witt Jr. as Texas' best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Witt Jr. joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo High School, Mich.), Jon Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Preparatory School, Wash.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman High School, Tenn.), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas), Rick Porcello (2006-2007, Seaton Hall Preparatory School, N.J.) and Kris Bryant (2009-10, Bonanza High School, Nev.).

The 6-foot-1, 185-pound senior shortstop and right-handed pitcher had led the Panthers to a 33-3 record and a berth in the Class 5A regional semifinals scheduled for May 25. Witt batted .519 with 15 doubles, eight triples and 14 home runs through 36 games, piling up 49 RBI, almost half of which (24) had come with two outs. Entering the regional final four, he owned an OBP of .579, a slugging percentage of 1.117 and a dizzying 1.696 OPS to go with 22 walks and stolen 17 bases in 19 attempts. He had grounded into just one double-play in 120 at-bats. On the mound, Witt had recorded two saves to go with a 1.62 ERA in nine relief appearances, striking out 18 batters and issuing just one walk in 8.2 innings on the mound. His WHIP going into the semifinals was .808 and opposing batters were hitting .188. A two-time Under Armour All-American Game selection where he earned MVP honors in 2018, he was a member of the 2018 USA Baseball 18U National Team and is the nation's top-ranked prep prospect by Baseball America, Perfect Game and Prep Baseball Report.

Selected by his teachers to serve in his school's Peer Assistant Leadership Group, Witt mentors grade school students with disabilities on a weekly basis. A member of Students Stand Strong and Colleyville Heritage's Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter, he has volunteered by helping the homeless on behalf of Phillips Wish and by combating bullying in association with Rachel's Challenge. Also a youth baseball instructor and a participant in the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots program, he is an active member of his Good Shepherd Catholic church community. "Bobby Witt Jr. is one of the most dynamic and exciting players in the country," says Carlos Collazo, national writer for Baseball America. "From a scouting perspective, he has all the tools you could ask for, with a solid understanding of the strike zone, standout baserunning ability, power and defensive skills up the middle along with a strong and accurate arm. He's also a remarkable person off of the field."

Witt has maintained a weighted 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Oklahoma beginning this fall, but is projected as an early round selection in June's Major League Baseball draft.

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. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Witt Jr. joins recent Gatorade Texas Baseball Players of the Year Brett Baty (2017-18, Lake Travis High School), Alex Scherff (2016-17, Colleyville Heritage High School), Kyle Muller (2015-16, Jesuit College Preparatory School of Dallas), Luken Baker (2014-15, Oak Ridge High School), and Tyler Kolek (2013-14, Shepherd High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a part of Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Witt Jr. 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 submit an essay to win one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants for the organization of choice, which will be announced throughout the year.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [www.Gatorade.com/POY](http://www.Gatorade.com/POY), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY](http://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/Gatorade](http://www.twitter.com/Gatorade).

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