

**CENTRAL BUCKS EAST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE PENNSYLVANIA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 21, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Nick Bitsko of Central Bucks East High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Pennsylvania Baseball Player of the Year. Bitsko is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Central Bucks East 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 Bitsko as Pennsylvania's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Bitsko 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-4, 255-pound senior outfielder and right-handed pitcher is ranked as the nation's No. 16 prospect by Perfect Game and a 2020 Perfect Game Preseason All-American. A USA Baseball National Team Development Program invitee in both the 2018 and 2019 offseasons, he batted .450 with five home runs, 15 RBI and a 1.416 OPS for the Patriots in 2019.

Bitsko has volunteered locally on behalf of Rock Steady Boxing in association with the Parkinson's Disease Foundation and has completed multiple service-mission trips to the Dominican Republic. "Nick Bitsko is a formidable combination of talent, dedication and hard work," said Central Bucks East High School head coach head coach Kyle Dennis. "His skill set as a pitcher and hitter are beyond those of any high school player that I have encountered in my 18 years coaching high school baseball."

Bitsko has maintained a 3.95 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Virginia 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 and 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.

Bitsko joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Baseball Players of the Year Michael Siani (2017-18, William Penn Charter School), Zach Kokoska (2016-17, Greater Latrobe Senior High School), Alex Kirilloff (2015-16, Plum Senior High School), and Mike Nikorak (2014-15, Stroudsburg High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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