

**ARVADA WEST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE COLORADO BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 1, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Cooper Vais of Arvada West High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Colorado Baseball Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes for their excellence in sport, academics and community. The award recognizes Vais as Colorado’s best high school baseball player and he joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park, TX), MacKenzie Gore (2016-17, Whiteville High School, NC) and Seth Hernandez (2024-25, Corona High School, CA).

At the time of his selection, the 6-foot, 200-pound junior right-handed pitcher and shortstop had led the Wildcats (24-4) to the Class 5A state tournament losers’ bracket final. Vais compiled a record of 12-0 on the mound through 28 games, posting a 0.57 ERA and 103 strikeouts in 61 innings. Ranked as the nation’s No. 93 prospect in his class by Perfect Game, he batted .459 with 29 RBI, 34 runs scored and seven home runs entering the postseason elimination game.

Vais has volunteered locally with the Arvada West Unified Physical Education class as a peer mentor for students with disabilities. He has also donated his time to Special Olympics baseball and softball events. “I think Cooper has such electric stuff and (he disguises his pitches well),” said David Miller, Northfield High School head coach. “He also knows how to attack batters so they stay off balance.”

Vais has maintained a 4.1 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Texas beginning in the fall of 2027.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one state winner from each of the 50 states and Washington D.C., in 12 different sports: football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, baseball, softball, boys and girls soccer, and boys and girls track & field. In total, 610 high school athletes are honored each year. From the pool of state winners, one national winner is selected in each of the 12 sports. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the winners in each sport.

As part of Gatorade’s commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$6.4 million in grants to winners across more than 2,200 organizations.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.

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