

BILLINGS CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE MONTANA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 1, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Paxton Prill of Billings Central Catholic High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Montana 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 Prill as Montana'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-3, 210-pound junior left-handed pitcher, first baseman and outfielder had led the Rams (15-3) to the Eastern A Division title and a berth in the MHSA Class A/B Baseball Tournament. Prill compiled a record of 5-0 on the mound with a 0.00 ERA through 18 games along with 50 strikeouts against just six walks over 24 innings. Opponents batted.027 against him as he fired five shutouts including three no-hitters. He also entered the postseason with a .333 batting average and three RBI as well as a fielding percentage of 1.000.

A participant in the HOSA Bowl, which tests competitors' knowledge and skills about various topics in health, Prill has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and he's also donated his time to youth baseball camps. He is also a member of his school's Vision Club. "Paxton Prill is a top-tier competitor on the mound, no matter what the situation he is put in," said Billings West High School head coach Kyhler Thomson. "He prepares every single day whether he's starting in five days or starting the next day and he flat out gets after it. He doesn't take a single pitch off until he comes out of the game. Prill deserves Gatorade Player of the Year in my mind and he's just going to get better and better. It'll be awesome to see how he grows in the near future and into his college career.

Prill has maintained an A-plus average in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to play baseball next fall at the University of Notre Dame.

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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