

**EAST UNION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MISSISSIPPI SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Lucy Cochran of East Union High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Mississippi Softball 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 Cochran as Mississippi’s best high school softball player and she joins an elite legacy that spans professional athletes and coaches to CEOs, such as Cat Osterman (2000-01, Cypress, TX), Alicia Hollowell (2001-02, Fairfield, CA) and Hannah Wells (2024-25, Coahoma, TX).

The 5-foot-5 senior right-handed pitcher and infielder led the Urchins (36-3) to the Class 2A state championship this past season. Cochran compiled a record of 24-2 in the circle with a 0.82 ERA and 220 strikeouts in 128.2 innings, an average of 1.7 strikeouts per frame. Named 2A Miss Softball for the fourth straight season, she also batted .470 with 54 RBI, seven home runs and 38 runs scored.

Cochran has volunteered locally with her school’s Beta Club, keeping a campus “blessing box” stocked with food and other items for people in the community who are in need. She also has donated her time to multiple community service initiatives in association with the school’s Anchor Club, including a winter coat drive and a toy drive for needy children during the holidays. “Her selflessness, character and work ethic are second to none,” said John Harris, head coach at Smithville High School. “Lucy is a young person of remarkable athletic accomplishments, but she continues to stay humble. She has always been one to focus on helping others be the best they can be.”

Cochran has maintained a 3.95 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play softball at the Copiah-Lincoln College in Wesson this fall.

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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