

**BRYAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE OHIO SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 2026) — In its 41st year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Thea Staten of Bryan High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Ohio 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 Staten as Ohio’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).

At the time of her selection, the 5-foot-8 senior right-handed pitcher had led the Golden Bears to a 23-0 record and a berth in the Division IV state semifinals this spring. Staten compiled a 23-0 mark with a 0.33 ERA in the circle, striking out 336 batters and allowing just 30 hits in 148 innings through 23 games. The 2025 Division IV First Team All-State selection owned a .513 batting average with seven home runs, 31 RBI and a .974 slugging percentage entering the final four. She’s ranked as the nation’s No. 37 recruit in the Class of 2026 by Perfect Game.

Staten has volunteered locally with A Night to Shine in association with the Tim Tebow Foundation and the Miracle League of Northwest Ohio. She has also donated her time as a youth tutor and softball coach. “Thea is confident and strong, throws the ball extremely hard and spins it well,” said Saran Dominique, head coach of Archbold High School. “She has a huge impact on their success, both at the plate and in the circle. She’s a competitor through and through.”

Staten has maintained a 3.82 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play softball at North Carolina State University 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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