

**MATOACA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE VIRGINIA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 2026) — In its 41<sup>st</sup> year celebrating the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Kaylee Hodges of Matoaca High School is the 2025-26 Gatorade Virginia 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 Hodges as Virginia’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-9 junior right-handed pitcher and first baseman had led the Warriors to a 20-1 record and a berth in the Class 5, Region C tournament semifinals this spring. Hodges compiled a 15-1 record in the circle through 21 games with a 0.00 ERA and 246 strikeouts in 100 innings. She allowed just 14 hits and 10 walks with four perfect games, including two in a row, retiring 46 consecutive batters at one point. The state’s returning Gatorade Player of the Year and ranked as the nation’s No. 3 pitcher in the Class of 2027 by Extra Inning Softball, she owned a .563 batting average with eight home runs, 25 RBI, 12 doubles and a 1.354 slugging percentage entering the regional semifinals.

A member of her school’s chapter of Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Hodges served as manager for the Matoaca High football team last fall. She has volunteered locally as a peer tutor and youth softball coach. “Kaylee is a generational talent,” said Jerry Perkinson, head coach of Dinwiddie High School. “She’s a fierce competitor. She’s taken over a game many times the last two years.”

Hodges has maintained a weighted 4.54 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to receive athletic aid to play softball at the University of Tennessee 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](http://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](https://x.com/Gatorade).

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