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**MADISON CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MISSISSIPPI BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 2, 2010) — In its 25th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with ESPN RISE, today announced Brayden Jones of Madison Central High School as its 2009-10 Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Player of the Year. Jones is the first Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Madison Central High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the field, distinguishes Jones as Mississippi's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award announced in June, Jones joins an elite alumni association of past state baseball award winners, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Roy Halladay (1994-95, Arvada West HS, Colo.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman HS, Tenn.), Chipper Jones (1989-90, Bolles School, Fla.), Derek Lee (1992-93, El Camino HS, Calif.) and John Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Prep, Wash.).

The 5-foot-11 senior right-handed pitcher and third baseman led the Jaguars (31-4) to the Class 6A state championship series, posting a 10-1 record with a 1.59 ERA and 83 strikeouts in 57.1 innings while batting .376 with four home runs and 29 RBIs, compiling a .614 slugging percentage. A 2010 *Clarion-Ledger* Dandy Dozen selection, Jones also helped lead Madison Central to the Class 5A state champion as a junior in 2009.

Jones has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has volunteered locally on behalf of the US Marine Corps Toys for Tots Foundation, as a tutor and mentor for elementary school children and as part of multiple community service initiatives in association with his church youth group.

"Brayden Jones has the competitiveness and drive to make himself the best player he can be," said Madison Central Head Coach Gregg Perry. "When the game is on the line, he always wants the bat and he always wants the ball. You can't teach that type of stuff. You have to be born with it and he's got it."

Jones has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Mississippi State University this fall.

The Gatorade Player of the Year program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by ESPN RISE and the Gatorade high school sports leadership team, which work with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Jones joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Players of the Year Darren Farmer (2008-09, West Lauderdale), Rashun Dixon (2007-08, Terry) and Paxton Pace (2006-07, West Lauderdale) among the state's list of former award winners.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. For more on the Gatorade Player of the Year program, including nomination information, a complete list of past winners, and the announcement of the Gatorade National Player of the Year, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com.

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