

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jason Belenke (312-729-3631)

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

CHICAGO (May 27, 2014) — — In its 29th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Austin Riley of DeSoto Central High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Player of the Year. Riley is the first Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from DeSoto 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 Riley as Mississippi's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Riley joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, 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 6-foot-3, 225-pound junior right-handed pitcher, infielder and catcher led the Jaguars to a 28-9 record and the Class 6A championship series. At the time of his selection, Riley owned an 8-3 record with a 1.51 ERA and 79 strikeouts in 60.3 innings pitched. A 2013 First Team All-State selection, he also batted .472 with nine home runs, 34 RBI, an .824 slugging percentage and a .577 on-base percentage through 37 games.

Riley has maintained a 3.36 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, he has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics and as a youth baseball coach."

"Austin Riley is a very well-rounded athlete," said David Lara, head coach at Hernando High. "He has power at the plate and can be a very dominant pitcher. I can say without reservation that he is very high quality young man."

Riley has verbally committed to play baseball on an athletic scholarship at Mississippi State University beginning in the fall of 2015.

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 the Gatorade high school sports leadership team in partnership with [USA TODAY High School Sports](#), 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.

Riley joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Players of the Year Reid Humphreys (2012-13, Northwest Rankin High School), Anthony Alford (2011-12, Petal High School), Mason Robbins (2010 - 11, George County High School), Brayden Jones (2009-10, Madison Central), Darren Farmer (2008-09, West Lauderdale), Rashun Dixon (2007-08, Terry), and Paxton Pace (2006-2007, 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 www.gatorade.com/poy.

###