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**FRENCHTOWN HIGH SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MONTANA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 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 Morgan Ray of Frenchtown High School as its 2013-14 Gatorade Montana Softball Player of the Year. Ray is the first Gatorade Montana Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Frenchtown 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 Ray as Montana's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Ray joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The returning Gatorade State Player of the Year, the 5-foot-10 junior right-handed pitcher and first baseman posted a 23-1 record along with a 0.72 ERA in the circle this past season, leading the Broncs (28-1) to a second straight Class A state title. Ray struck out 280 batters and walked just 28 in 145 innings pitched. She fired 10 no-hitters, including one perfect game, and held opponents to a .114 batting average. At the plate, the two-time Class A First Team All-State selection batted .598 with 12 home runs, 54 RBI and a 1.253 slugging percentage.

Ray has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. A member of the Frenchtown High student council, she has volunteered locally at a food bank and with Mountain Home Montana, a program that provides housing to young mothers and their children.

"Morgan Ray is Frenchtown's team, not only in the circle but also at the plate," said Kelci Thatcher, head coach of Butte Central High. "She does not have a weakness. She throws harder than anyone I have seen in the state in quite some time."

Ray has made a verbal commitment to play softball on an athletic scholarship at The Ohio State University 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.

Two-time winner Ray joins Gatorade Montana Softball Players of the Year Heidi Riley (2011-12, Skyview High School), Jaimee Paffhausen (2010-11, Butte High School), Jessyka MacDonald (2009-10, Billings West), DJ Johnson (2008-09, Hellgate), Maghan Yurek (2007-08, CMR), and Bobbie Lee (2006-07, C.M. Russell) 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.

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