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**STROUDSBURG HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® PENNSYLVANIA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 28, 2015) — In its 30th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Mike Nikorak of Stroudsburg High School as its 2014-15 Gatorade Pennsylvania Baseball Player of the Year. Nikorak is the first Gatorade Pennsylvania Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Stroudsburg 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 Nikorak as Pennsylvania's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Nikorak 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 Jon Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Prep, Wash.).

At the time of his selection, the 6-foot-5, 224-pound senior right-handed pitcher and outfielder had led the Mountaineers to a 22-2 record and the Class AAAA Western Pennsylvania district semifinals. A 2014 First Team All-State honoree, Nikorak posted a 2-1 record with a 0.94 ERA and 50 strikeouts in 29.2 innings through 24 games. The nation's No. 3 prep prospect as rated by Perfect Game USA, he also batted .417 with six home runs, 23 RBI and a .792 slugging percentage. He was the starting pitcher at the Under Armour All-American game at Wrigley Field in Chicago last summer, pitching one scoreless inning without allowing a baserunner and striking out two batters.

Nikorak has maintained a 3.50 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally as a peer mentor and as a youth baseball coach.

"I've coached against Mike Nikorak for the last four years and he is a phenomenal baseball player," said Brian Wolf, head coach at Nazareth High. "Whether he is pitching, hitting, or playing right field, he has an impact on the game. With his fastball sitting between 93-96 mph, along with his curveball, he is nearly unhittable to high school players. He hits for power and has a cannon from right field.

Nikorak has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Alabama this fall, but is projected as an early round selection in June's Major League Baseball draft.

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.

Nikorak joins recent Gatorade Pennsylvania Baseball Players of the Year Brendan McKay (2013-14 & 2012-13, Blackhawk High School), Kenny Koplove (2011-12, William Penn Charter School), Derek Fisher (2010-11, Cedar Crest High School), Sean Coyle (2009-10, Germantown Academy), Mike Lubanski (2008-09, Malvern Preparatory School), Zak Sinclair (2007-08, West Allegheny), and Devin Mesoraco (2006-07, Punxsutawney) 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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