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**LAKWOOD HIGH SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® FLORIDA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 24, 2016) — In its 31st year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Bo Bichette of Lakewood High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Florida Baseball Player of the Year. Bichette is the first Gatorade Florida Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Lakewood 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 Bichette as Florida's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Bichette 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 5-foot-11, 186-pound senior shortstop batted .574 with 13 home runs and 41 RBI this past season, leading the Spartans (13-14) to the Class 5A regional semifinals. An American Family Insurance ALL-USA Preseason Baseball Team selection as named by USA TODAY, Bichette scored 46 runs, worked 32 walks, belted 25 extra-base hits and stole 21 bases in just 61 official at-bats, recording a .707 on-base percentage and 1.424 slugging percentage. The son of Dante Bichette, a four-time Major League Baseball All-Star who led the National League in home runs (40) and RBI (128) while hitting .340 in 1995, the younger Bichette hit 10 home runs in the final round of the Eastbay Home Run Derby at the 2015 Under Armour All-America Baseball Game.

Bichette has maintained a B average in the classroom. In addition to donating his time as a youth baseball instructor, he has volunteered locally on behalf of his church's youth outreach program and at a homeless shelter.

"His work ethic is unbelievable, and he has most certainly earned everything, despite having the name Bichette," said Nolan Lofgren, head coach at rival Bayshore High. "Even without that last name, he is one of the top high school hitters I have ever seen, and that list includes Billy Butler, Francisco Lindor, Carlos Correa, Javier Baez, Eric Hosmer, Casey Kotchman and many more."

Bichette has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Arizona State University 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.

Bichette joins recent Gatorade Florida Baseball Players of the Year Kyle Tucker (2014-15, Plant High School), Nicholas Gordon (2013-14 & 2012-13, Olympia High School), Lance McCullers, Jr. (2011-12, Jesuit High School), Jose Fernandez (2010-11, Alonso High School), Nick Castellanos (2009-10, Archbishop McCarthy High School), Bobby Borcherling (2008-09, Bishop Verot Catholic High School), Eric Hosmer (2007-08, American Heritage School), and Michael Main (2006-07, DeLand High School) 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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