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**ROCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED  
GATORADE® ILLINOIS BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 24, 2016) — In its 31<sup>st</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, in collaboration with USA TODAY High School Sports, today announced Tyler Fitzgerald of Rochester High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Illinois Baseball Player of the Year. Fitzgerald is the first Gatorade Illinois Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Rochester 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 Fitzgerald as Illinois's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Fitzgerald 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, 190-pound senior shortstop had led the Rockets to a 20-10 record at the time of his selection. Fitzgerald owned a .482 batting average with five home runs, 23 RBI and 36 stolen bases through 30 games. He also scored 48 runs and posted a .639 on-base percentage. A Second Team All-State selection as a junior, Fitzgerald was a Rawlings/Perfect Game First Team Preseason All-American.

Fitzgerald has maintained a 4.21 GPA in the classroom. A member of the National Honor Society and a junior high school mentor, he has volunteered locally on behalf of special needs students and youth baseball camps.

"Fitzgerald is a nightmare to play against because there is no good way to attack him," said Danny Midiri, head coach at Lanphier High. "He's extremely patient at the plate, and when he gets a pitch to hit, he takes full advantage of it. In the field, he's a smooth defender with an incredible arm."

Fitzgerald has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Louisville 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 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.

Fitzgerald joins recent Gatorade Illinois Baseball Players of the Year Charlie Donovan (2014-15, Westmont High School), Evan Skoug (2013-14, Libertyville High School), Ryne Roper (2012-13, Harrisburg High School), Kyle Funkhouser (2011-12, Oak Forest High School), Charlie Tilson (2010-11, New Trier Township High School), Jake DePew (2009-10, Granite City High School), Kevin Koziol (2008-09, Brother Rice High School), Jake Odorizzi (2007-08, Highland High School), and Jake Smolinski (2006-07, Boylan Catholic 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](http://www.gatorade.com/poy).

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