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**PELLA HIGH SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® IOWA 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 Grant Judkins of Pella High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Iowa Baseball Player of the Year. Judkins is the first Gatorade Iowa Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Pella 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 Judkins as Iowa's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Judkins 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, 192-pound senior right-handed pitcher and infielder posted an 11-1 record with a 0.56 ERA and 112 strikeouts in 74.2 innings, leading the Dutch (34-5) to the Class 3A semifinals this past season. A 2015 First Team All-State selection, Judkins also batted .520 with 13 home runs, 57 RBI and 51 runs scored.

Judkins has maintained a 3.95 GPA in the classroom. He has volunteered locally with the Salvation Army in addition to donating his time assisting the elderly and on behalf of his church youth group.

"Grant Judkins has worked hard to make himself a standout in the state of Iowa," said Chris Coffman, head coach at Grinnell High. "As a competitor, he is respectful and showed good sportsmanship every time we have played him."

Judkins has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Iowa this fall.

Iowa—distinct from the other 46 states sanctioning baseball—begins its high school season in conjunction with Memorial Day, which results in the annual Gatorade honor being based upon candidates' previous scholastic season and offseason club/showcase performance, if applicable.

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.

Judkins joins recent Gatorade Iowa Baseball Players of the Year Robert Neustrom (2014-15, North High School), Keaton McKinney (2013-14, Ankeny High School), Dom Thompson-Williams (2012-13, Sioux City East High School), Calvin Mathews (2011-12, Davis County High School), Austin Christensen (2010-11, Kennedy High School), Damek Tomscha (2009-10, North High School), Dean McArdle (2008-09, North High School), B.J. Hermsen (2007-08, West Delaware High School), and Jon Gilmore (2006-07, City 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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