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**OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® MISSISSIPPI 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 Jason Barber of Oxford High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Player of the Year. Barber is the first Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Oxford 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 Barber as Mississippi's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Barber 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.).

The 6-foot-1, 191-pound senior right-handed pitcher and third baseman led the Chargers (28-8) to their second straight Class 5A state championship this past season. The state's returning Gatorade Baseball Player of the Year, Barber posted a 10-2 record with a 1.08 ERA and 126 strikeouts in 78 innings pitched. The 2016 Clarion-Ledger Dandy Dozen selection also batted .330 with five home runs, 37 RBI and a .536 slugging percentage.

Barber has maintained a 3.62 GPA in the classroom. A devoted parishioner in his church community, he has volunteered locally at a homeless shelter and as a youth baseball coach.

"Jason Barber is a fine young man on the field and has some of the best stuff I've seen from a high school pitcher," said Greg Lewis, head coach at Lafayette High. "They have a chance for another shot at the title and he is a big reason for the success."

Barber has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship the University of Mississippi 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.

Two-time winner Barber joins Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Players of the Year Austin Riley (2013-14, DeSoto Central High School), Reid Humphreys (2012-13, Northwest Rankin High School), Anthony Alford (2011-12, Petal High School), Mason Robbins (2010-11, George County High School), Brayden Jones (2009-10, Madison Central High School), Darren Farmer (2008-09, West Lauderdale High School), Rashun Dixon (2007-08, Terry High School), and Paxton Pace (2006-07, West Lauderdale 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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