

Contact: John Manzo (312-729-3622)

**SEVIER COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® TENNESSEE 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 Zach Linginfelter of Sevier County High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Tennessee Baseball Player of the Year. Linginfelter is the first Gatorade Tennessee Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Sevier County 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 Linginfelter as Tennessee's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Linginfelter 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-4, 232-pound senior right-handed pitcher led the Smoky Bears to a 30-13 record and a berth in the Class AAA state tournament, scheduled to begin May 24. A 2015 Under Armour All-America Baseball Game selection, Linginfelter owned a 7-2 record with a 1.60 ERA and 113 strikeouts in 56.2 innings pitched through 43 games. Also a first baseman, he batted .455 with nine home runs, 17 doubles, 25 runs scored and 51 RBI entering the regional state tournament.

Linginfelter has maintained a 3.45 GPA in the classroom. In addition to donating his time as a youth baseball instructor, he has volunteered working the concession stand at sporting events and serving meals at his church during the holidays.

"On the field, he is an absolute game-changer at our level, both on the mound and at the plate," said Nathan Fritz, head coach at rival Morristown-Hamblen High West. "What he does on the mound easily speaks for itself, but just his presence in the lineup makes you pitch the entire team differently. And I haven't even mentioned what he can actually do in the box."

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

Linginfelter joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Baseball Players of the Year Donny Everett (2014-15, Clarksville High School), Justus Sheffield (2013-14, Tullahoma High School), Wil Crowe (2012-13, Pigeon Forge High School), Jonathan King (2011-12, Riverdale High School), Daniel Norris (2010-11, Science Hill High School), Ethan Bennett (2009-10, Farragut High School), Curt Powell (2008-09, Farragut High School), Sonny Gray (2007-08, Smyrna High School), and Taylor Hill (2006-07, Mt. Juliet 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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