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**EAST CARTER HIGH SCHOOL STANDOUT NAMED
GATORADE® KENTUCKY SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 2, 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 Montana Fouts of East Carter High School as its 2015-16 Gatorade Kentucky Softball Player of the Year. Fouts is the first Gatorade Kentucky Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from East Carter 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 Fouts as Kentucky's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Fouts joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Alicia Hollowell (2000-01, Fairfield HS, Calif.), Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo HS, Mich.), Candace Parker (2001-02, Naperville Central HS, Ill.), Abby Wambach (1997-98, Our Lady of Mercy, N.Y.), Mark Sanchez (2004-05, Mission Viejo HS, Calif.), Angela Tincher (2002-03, James River HS, Va.) and Kenzie Fowler (2006-07, Canyon del Oro HS, Ariz.).

The 6-foot-1 sophomore right-handed pitcher and first baseman had posted a 28-0 record in the circle along with a 0.16 ERA this season, leading the Raiders (32-0) to the 16th Region Tournament semifinals against Ashland Blazer High, scheduled for May 31. At the time of her selection, Fouts had struck out 389 batters in 173 innings pitched. She had allowed just 22 hits and 14 walks, firing 13 no-hitters and eight perfect games. At the plate, the 2015 Class 2A First Team All-State selection was batting .472 with five home runs, 43 RBI and a .831 slugging percentage.

Fouts has maintained a weighted 3.50 GPA in the classroom. A student ambassador for Wounded Warriors, she has volunteered locally as a youth softball coach and as part of multiple community-service initiatives through her church youth group.

"Montana Fouts is the best pitcher and player that I have had the opportunity to compete against in 22 years of coaching," said Larry Slone, head coach of Rowan County High. "For those people that get the chance to watch her pitch, they will go away knowing they have had the opportunity to see something special."

Fouts has made a verbal commitment to play softball on an athletic scholarship at the University of Alabama beginning in the fall of 2018.

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.

Fouts joins recent Gatorade Kentucky Softball Players of the Year Megan Hensley (2014-15 & 2013-14, Paul G. Blazer High School), Jessica Adell (2012-13, Ballard High School), Allison Foster (2011-12, Christian Academy of Louisville), Griffin Joiner, (2010-11, Christian County High School), Emily Gaines, (2009-10, South Laurel High School), Megan Taylor (2008-09, North Laurel High School), and Kirsten Allen (2007-08 & 2006-07, Ryle 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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