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**ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE IOWA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 30, 2017) — In its 32<sup>nd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced John Swanda of Roosevelt High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Iowa Baseball Player of the Year. Swanda is the first Gatorade Iowa Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Roosevelt 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 Swanda as Iowa's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Swanda joins an elite alumni association of past state award-winners in 12 sports, including Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo High School, Mich.), Jon Lester (2001-02, Bellarmine Preparatory School, Wash.), David Price (2003-04, Blackman High School, Tenn.), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas), Rick Porcello (2006-2007, Seaton Hall Preparatory School, N.J.) and Kris Bryant (2009-10, Bonanza High School, Nev.).

The 6-foot-2, 180-pound senior shortstop and right-handed pitcher batted .486 with seven home runs, 61 RBI and 43 runs scored this past season, leading the Roughriders to a 33-11 record and the Class 4A semifinals. A First Team All-State selection, he led all of Class 4A in RBI and base hits while also posting a 3-1 record on the mound on the strength of a 2.83 ERA and 29 strikeouts in 34.2 innings.

Swanda has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics in addition to donating his time to an area homeless shelter and as a youth baseball coach. "John Swanda plays the game the such finesse," said Rudy Pithan, head coach at Des Moines North High. "He is fluid with both his glove and his swing. He was the one opponent on the Roosevelt team that was intimidating, because he was such a good player."

Swanda has maintained a B average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Nebraska 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 Player of the Year Selection Committee, 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.

Swanda joins recent Gatorade Iowa Baseball Players of the Year Grant Judkins (2015-16, Pella High School), 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. Hermesen (2007-08, West Delaware High School), and Jon Gilmore (2006-07, City High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, John will be able to select a national or local youth sports organization to receive a grant as part of the Gatorade Play It Forward program. Every Gatorade Player of the Year state winner receives a \$1,000 grant to donate and will have the opportunity to enter for an additional \$10,000 spotlight grant by writing a brief essay explaining why their selected organization deserves additional support. 12 spotlight grants - one for each sport - will be announced throughout the year.

To keep up to date on the latest happenings, become a fan of Gatorade Player of the Year on Facebook and follow the conversation on Twitter #GatoradePOY. 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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