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**NORRIS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 30, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Austin Schultz of Norris High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Nebraska Baseball Player of the Year. Schultz is the second Gatorade Nebraska Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Norris 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 Schultz as Nebraska's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Schultz 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 5-foot-10, 180-pound junior shortstop led the Titans to a 24-5 record and the Class B state championship game this past season. Schultz posted a .446 batting average with five home runs, 24 RBI, 25 stolen bases and 34 runs scored. A member of the USA Baseball U17 National Development Team, he was a First Team All-State and Second Team Super-State selection as a sophomore.

A devoted member of his church community, Schultz has assisted a local farmer and has volunteered on behalf of youth baseball programs. "Austin Schultz is a tremendous baseball player," said Kyle McCright, head coach at Elkhorn High. "He has a nice, smooth swing and a very strong arm, and he has game-changing speed."

Schultz has maintained a 3.14 GPA in the classroom. He will begin his senior year of high school 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.

Schultz joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Baseball Players of the Year Cole Stobbe (2015-16 & 2014-15, Millard West High School), Jakson Reetz (2013-14 & 2012-13, Norris High School), Nate Griep (2011-12, Millard West High School), Casey Gillaspie (2010-11, Millard North High School), Logan Ehlers (2009-10 & 2008-09, Nebraska City High School), Kash Kalkowski (2007-08, Grand Island Senior High School), and Matt Freeman (2006-07, Elkhorn High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Austin 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.