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**NEW RIEGEL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE OHIO 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 Michael Kirian of New Riegel High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Ohio Baseball Player of the Year. Kirian is the first Gatorade Ohio Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from New Riegel 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 Kirian as Ohio's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Kirian 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-6, 250-pound senior left-handed pitcher and outfielder had led the Blue Jackets to a 20-5 record and a berth in the Division IV regional semifinals at the time of his selection. Kirian posted a 5-0 record on the mound with a 0.75 ERA and 89 strikeouts in 37 innings through 25 games. Ranked as the state's No. 1 recruit in the Class of 2017 by Perfect Game, he also batted .472 with three home runs, 29 RBI and a .792 slugging percentage.

A member of his school's Language Club, he has volunteered locally on behalf of Students Against Destructive Decisions and the Ronald McDonald House Charities. "Michael Kirian is an outstanding player who is skilled both on the mound and at the plate," said Rick Bowerman, head coach at Seneca East. "He is an outstanding person with excellent sportsmanship and high character."

Kirian has maintained a 3.22 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Louisville 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.

Kirian joins recent Gatorade Ohio Baseball Players of the Year Chris Machamer (2015-16, Washington High School), Ryan Feltner (2014-15, Walsh Jesuit High School), Cameron Varga (2013-14, Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy), Andrew Benintendi (2012-13, Madeira High School), Adam Schaly (2011-12, Ashland High School), Taylore Cherry (2010-11, Butler High School), David Whitehead (2009-10, Moeller High School), Tyler Skulina (2008-09, Walsh Jesuit High School), Ryan Curl (2007-08, St. Francis DeSales High School), and Derek Dietrich (2006-07, St. Ignatius High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Michael 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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