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CHRISTIAN ACADEMY OF KNOXVILLE STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE TENNESSEE 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 Spencer Strider of Christian Academy of Knoxville as its 2016-17 Gatorade Tennessee Baseball Player of the Year. Strider is the first Gatorade Tennessee Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Christian Academy of Knoxville.

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 Strider as Tennessee's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Strider 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, 185-pound senior right-handed pitcher posted an 8-0 record on the mound with a 0.68 ERA and 101 strikeouts in 51 innings this past season, leading the Warriors (34-5) to the Division I-Class AA regional final. Ranked as the state's No. 3 recruit in the Class of 2017 by Perfect Game, Strider held opposing hitters to a .118 batting average and averaged 13.9 strikeouts per seven innings.

Strider has volunteered locally on behalf of youth baseball programs and assisted in landscaping projects for the elderly. "Spencer Strider is the most accomplished pitcher I have seen in 30 years of coaching," said Christian Academy of Knoxville head coach Tommy Pharr. "He is a young man of great character, a very good student and has a tremendous work ethic. He is a great teammate and I have been blessed to coach him."

Strider has maintained a 3.86 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Clemson University 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.

Strider joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Baseball Players of the Year Zach Linginfelter (2015-16, Sevier County High School), 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.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Spencer 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.

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