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**C.M. RUSSELL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE® MONTANA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 5, 2017) — In its 32nd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Tristin Achenbach of C.M. Russell High School as its 2016-17 Gatorade Montana Softball Player of the Year. Achenbach is the fourth Gatorade Montana Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from C.M. Russell 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 Achenbach as Montana's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Achenbach joins an elite alumni association of past state softball award-winners, including Catherine Osterman (2000-01, Cy Spring High School, Texas), Kelsey Stewart (2009-10, Arkansas City High School, Kan.), Carley Hoover (2012-13 D.W. Daniel High School, S.C.), Jenna Lilley (2012-13, Hoover High School, Ohio), Morgan Zerkle (2012-13 Cabell Midland High School, W. Va.), and Rachel Garcia (2014-15, Highland High School, Calif.).

The 6-foot senior right-handed pitcher led the Rustlers to a 24-1 record and the Class AA state championship this past season. Achenbach, who also won Gatorade State Player of the Year in 2015-16 as a member of the Conrad-Choteau co-op team, posted a 17-1 mark in the circle with a 0.23 earned run average and 264 strikeouts in 122.1 innings pitched. She allowed 27 hits, holding opponents to a .068 batting average. At the plate, Achenbach batted .408 with six doubles, 22 RBI and a .605 slugging percentage. She concluded her prep softball career with 16 state records, including 55 career doubles, 56 consecutive pitching wins, 19 no-hitters and 1,169 strikeouts.

Achenbach has volunteered locally with the Great Falls Rescue Mission and as a youth softball and basketball coach. "Tristin has put together one of the finest prep careers in Montana history," said Mick Morris, head coach of Hellgate High and Achenbach's coach with Conrad-Choteau. "In addition to her prowess on the mound, she is also an incredible offensive player."

Achenbach has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Montana beginning 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.

Two-time winner Achenbach joins Gatorade Montana Softball Players of the Year Morgan Ray (2014-15, 2013-14 & 2012-13, Frenchtown High School), Heidi Riley (2011-12, Skyview High School), Jaimee Paffhausen (2010-11, Butte High School), Jessyka MacDonald (2009-10, Billings West High School), DJ Johnson (2008-09, Hellgate High School), Maghan Yurek (2007-08, CMR High School), and Bobbie Lee (2006-07, C.M. Russell High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Tristin 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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