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**HARTSELLE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ALABAMA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 29, 2018) — In its 33rd year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Garrett Wade of Hartselle High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Alabama Baseball Player of the Year. Wade is the third Gatorade Alabama Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Hartselle 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 Wade as Alabama's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Wade 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, 200-pound senior left-handed pitcher and outfielder produced a 7-2 record on the mound with a 1.02 ERA this past season, leading the Tigers (22-17) to the Class 6A state tournament. Wade struck out 109 batters and allowed just 18 hits and 20 walks in 54.2 innings pitched, tossing a perfect game against Collierville (Tenn.) in April. At the plate, Wade posted a .391 batting average with nine doubles, 30 runs scored and 27 RBIs. He compiled a .485 on-base percentage and a .527 slugging percentage.

A member of the Mu Alpha Theta math honors society, Wade has volunteered locally with Students Against Destructive Decisions and he has donated his time as part of multiple community service initiatives through his church.

"Garrett was phenomenal on the mound this season," said Tyler Stephenson, head coach of Austin High. "The kid is a great competitor. His competitive nature and playing the game the right way are as much of an asset as his ability."

Wade has maintained a weighted 4.24 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play baseball on scholarship at Auburn University this fall, but is projected as an early-round selection in June's Major League Baseball draft.

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.

Wade joins recent Gatorade Alabama Baseball Players of the Year Tanner Burns (2016-17, Decatur High School), Braxton Garrett (2015-16, Florence High School), Hunter Stovall (2014-15, Pelham High School), Cody Reed (2013-14, Ardmore High School), Keegan Thompson (2012-13, Cullman High School), Mikey White (2011-12, Spain Park High School), Keegan Thompson (2010-11, Cullman High School), Daryl Norris (2009-10, Fairhope), Luke Bole (2008-09, Hartselle), Tyler Stovall (2007-08, Hokes Bluff), and Hunter Morris (2006-07, Grissom) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Garrett 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 <http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com/>.

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