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**PINE CREEK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE COLORADO 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 Justin Olson of Pine Creek High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Colorado Baseball Player of the Year. Olson is the second Gatorade Colorado Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Pine Creek 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 Olson as Colorado's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Olson 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-3, 215-pound senior left-handed pitcher and first baseman had led the Eagles to a 20-3 record and a berth in the Class 5A state tournament at the time of his selection. At the plate, Olson produced a .525 batting average (31-for-59) with 14 home runs, 34 RBI, 31 runs, 20 walks, three triples and a slugging percentage of 1.423 through 23 games. On the mound, Olson posted a 3-1 record and five saves with a 1.77 earned run average and 46 strikeouts in 23.2 innings pitched, surrendering 19 hits and 12 walks. Olson owned a career .438 batting average to go with 30 home runs and 108 RBI entering the postseason.

Olson has volunteered locally as an assistant coach at the Eagles Baseball Clinic every summer.

"Justin's a big, strong guy who you might expect would only hit for power, but he's got good plate discipline, too," said Andrew Johnson, head coach at Fountain-Fort Carson High School. "Being in Colorado my whole life and coaching against some great players. Justin's that type of player. Just a phenomenal player, and they relied on him a lot."

Olson has maintained a weighted 3.48 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Kentucky 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.

Olson joins recent Gatorade Colorado Baseball Players of the Year Cole Winn (2016-17, Silver Creek High School), Paul Tillotson (2015-16, Lewis-Palmer High School), Ryan Madden (2014-15, Fairview High School), Max George (2013-14, Regis Jesuit High School), Griffin Jax (2012-13, Cherry Creek High School), Ryan Warner (2011-12, Pine Creek High School), Greg Bird (2010-11, Grandview High School), Marco Gonzales (2009-10, Rocky Mountain High School), Bryan Peters (2008-09, Rocky Mountain High School), Andy Burns (2007-08, Rocky Mountain High School), and Matt Presley (2006-07, Cheyenne Mountain High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Justin 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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