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## **ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE IDAHO BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 29, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Gabe Hughes of Rocky Mountain High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Idaho Baseball Player of the Year. Hughes is the third Gatorade Idaho Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Rocky Mountain 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 Hughes as Idaho's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Hughes 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-4, 220-pound junior right-handed pitcher and first baseman posted a 7-1 record with a 1.84 earned run average this past season, leading the Grizzlies (24-5) to the Class 5A consolation title. Hughes struck out 59 batters while allowing just 29 hits and 21 walks in 45.2 innings pitched. Offensively, Hughes batted .461 with four home runs, 31 RBI, 16 runs scored and a .477 on-base percentage. A 2017 First-Team All-Southern Idaho Conference selection, Hughes is ranked as the No. 1 recruit within Wyoming, Montana and Idaho in the Class of 2019 by Baseball Northwest.

Hughes has volunteered locally collecting quilts for service members at the Veterans Affairs office and has also donated his time to various projects at the Tree City Church in addition to serving as a basketball evaluator for Upward Sports.

"Gabe Hughes would be a great representative for the Idaho Gatorade Player of the Year," said Brian Champion, head coach at Centennial High School. "He had a great season on the mound and at the plate. He is a dual threat guy that can control or dominate the game both offensively and defensively."

Hughes has maintained a weighted 4.09 GPA in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to play baseball on scholarship at Gonzaga University beginning in the fall of 2019.

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.

Hughes joins recent Gatorade Idaho Baseball Players of the Year Ethan Christianson (2016-17, Rocky Mountain High School), Parker Price (2015-16 & 2014-15, Timberline High School), Nick Nyquist (2013-14, Coeur d'Alene High School), Levi Pereira (2012-13, Coeur d'Alene High School), Bryce Feist (2011-12, Rocky Mountain High School), Cy Sneed (2010-11, Twin Falls High School), Devon Austin (2009-10, Coeur d'Alene High School), Jacob Coats (2008-09, Twin Falls High School), Sean McDonald (2007-08, Boise High School), and Josh Osich (2006-07, Bishop Kelly High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Gabe 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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