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**WARREN EAST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE KENTUCKY 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 Ryan Hawks of Warren East High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Kentucky Baseball Player of the Year. Hawks is the second Gatorade Kentucky Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Warren East 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 Hawks as Kentucky's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Hawks 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, 205-pound junior right-handed pitcher and infielder had posted an 8-0 record with a 1.17 earned run average for the Raiders (13-17) at the time of his selection. In 54 innings pitched, Hawks had fanned 96 batters while allowing just 27 hits and six walks with an opponents' batting average of .142. He also batted .403 (30-for-99) with four home runs and 25 RBI along with 17 walks, a .551 on-base percentage and a .750 slugging percentage through 30 games. Ranked as the No. 1 Class of 2019 recruit in Kentucky by both Perfect Game and Prep Baseball Report, he threw two of his four high school no-hitters this season.

A member of Warren East High's Chamber of Commerce Student Ambassador Program, Hawks has donated his time fundraising for an alumnus who is battling brain cancer. He has also volunteered locally with the Norton Children's Hospital in addition to working with several homeless outreach programs.

"I think Ryan's pretty well deserving of Gatorade Player of the Year," said Jason Jagers, head coach at Greenwood High. "Against us, he was a hit batsman short of a perfect game. He was really spot on, kept us off balance, attacked with his fastball and overpowered. At the plate, he's got a great stick, a lot of power. He works hard, has a good attitude, and would represent this award well."

Hawks has maintained a 3.96 GPA in the classroom. He has made a verbal commitment to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Louisville 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.

Hawks joins recent Gatorade Kentucky Baseball Players of the Year Jordon "Jo" Adell (2016-17, Ballard High School), Jaren Shelby (2015-16, Bates Creek High School), Caleb Bruner (2014-15, Logan County High School), Kaleb Duckworth (2013-14, Henderson County High School), Drew Harrington (2012-13, Central Hardin High School), Ryne Combs (2011-12, Bryan Station High School), Zach Lucas (2010-11, Butler Traditional High School), Trevor Gott (2009-10, Bates Creek High School), Luke Maile (2008-09, Covington Catholic High School), Robbie Ross (2007-08, Lexington Christian Academy), and Ben Revere (2006-07, Lexington Catholic High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Ryan 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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