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**BRANDON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MISSISSIPPI 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 J.T. Ginn of Brandon High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Player of the Year. Ginn is the first Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Brandon 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 Ginn as Mississippi's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Ginn 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, 205-pound senior right-handed pitcher and shortstop led the Bulldogs (22-8) to the second round of the Class 6A tournament. Ginn posted a 5-1 record with a 0.36 earned run average on the mound, fanning 78 batters while allowing just nine walks and 10 hits to compile an opponents' batting average of .073 in 39.1 innings pitched. He fired two complete-game shutouts and a no-hitter. Ginn also batted .419 (31-for-74) with nine home runs and 27 RBI. He scored 36 runs, drew 40 walks, stole 10 bases and posted an on-base percentage of .624 and a slugging percentage of .918. A 2018 ALL-USA Preseason First Team selection by USA TODAY, Ginn is ranked No. 21 in Baseball America's Top High School Prospects list.

Ginn has volunteered locally on behalf of many community endeavors, including visiting local nursing homes, working with youth baseball teams and participating in projects for the beautification of parks. He has also donated his time to his school's canned food drive and to the Salvation Army's Christmas Angel distribution center.

"J.T. Ginn is, hands-down, the best player in the state," said Jay Powell, a former Major League pitcher who is now the head coach at Jackson Academy. "To me, it's not even a question."

Ginn has maintained an 88.8 average in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play baseball on scholarship at Mississippi State 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.

Ginn joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Players of the Year Trey Shaffer (2016-17, Biloxi High School), Jason Barber (2015-16 & 2014-15, Oxford High School), Austin Riley (2013-14, DeSoto Central High School), Reid Humphreys (2012-13, Northwest Rankin High School), Anthony Alford (2011-12, Petal High School), Mason Robbins (2010-11, George County High School), Brayden Jones (2009-10, Madison Central High School), Darren Farmer (2008-09, West Lauderdale High School), Rashun Dixon (2007-08, Terry High School), and Paxton Pace (2006-07, West Lauderdale High School) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, J.T. 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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