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DUNCAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE OKLAHOMA 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 Tyler Polk of Duncan High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Oklahoma Baseball Player of the Year. Polk is the first Gatorade Oklahoma Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Duncan 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 Polk as Oklahoma's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Polk 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 5-foot-11, 200-pound senior right-handed pitcher and centerfielder led the Demons (29-7) to the Class 5A state quarterfinals this past season. Polk went 10-1 on the mound, posting six shutouts and a 0.48 ERA, fanning 100 batters and allowing just 13 walks and 22 hits over 54.2 innings pitched. Offensively, he batted .512 (45-for-87) with two home runs, 36 RBI, 36 runs scored, 16 stolen bases and a .609 on-base percentage. The Southwest Oklahoma Baseball Coaches Association's Player of the Year, he is ranked No. 1 in Oklahoma in the Class of 2018 by Perfect Game.

A National Honor Society and Fellowship of Christian Athletes member, Polk has volunteered locally at the First United Methodist and Connection Church youth group and has donated his time to the Special Olympics in addition to mentoring young pitchers.

"Tyler is just a really good player," said Tony Reeder, head coach at Collinsville High. "I saw him throw in the state tournament. Gritty performance, because he wasn't 100 percent. I think he would be an excellent choice for the Gatorade Player of the Year."

Polk has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a national letter of intent to play baseball on scholarship at Oklahoma State University 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.

Polk joins recent Gatorade Oklahoma Baseball Players of the Year Ryan Vilade (2016-17, Stillwater High School), Cacy Harper (2015-16, Berryhill High School), Kyle Tyler (2014-15, Westmoore High School), Gavin LaValley (2013-14, Carl Albert High School), Austin O'Brien (2012-13, Owasso High School), Ty Hensley (2011-12, Edmond Santa Fe High School), Dylan Bundy (2010-11, 2009-10 & 2008-09, Owasso High School), Bobby Bundy (2007-08, Sperry), and Peter Kozma (2006-07, Owasso) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Tyler 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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