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**LAMOILLE UNION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT 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 Nick Fitzgerald of Lamoille Union High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Vermont Baseball Player of the Year. Fitzgerald is the first Gatorade Vermont Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Lamoille Union 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 Fitzgerald as Vermont's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year, Fitzgerald 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, 160-pound senior right-handed pitcher and shortstop had led the Lancers to a 12-0 record at the time of his selection. Fitzgerald posted a 4-0 record on the mound with a 0.65 ERA through 12 games to go with a .636 batting average, 11 RBI and 12 runs scored. He allowed just 10 hits in 32.1 innings pitched while striking out 55 batters. The Capital Division Player of the Year as a junior, Fitzgerald was also named to USA TODAY's American Family Insurance ALL-USA Vermont Second Team.

Fitzgerald has volunteered locally on behalf of food and toy drives, the American Red Cross, youth sports programs and an elementary school reading initiative.

"Nick Fitzgerald is very impressive to watch," said Jamie Richardson, head coach at Windsor High. "He's got a very good arm and great instincts; he has all the tools and seems to have a good head on his shoulders too. Defensively, he has exceptional range and he'll make the great plays as well as the everyday ones."

Fitzgerald has maintained a 3.18 GPA in the classroom. He will attend Penn State University-Harrisburg this fall, where he will play baseball.

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.

Fitzgerald joins recent Gatorade Vermont Baseball Players of the Year Jordy Allard (2016-17, Hartford High School), Mark Connor (2015-16, Bellows Free Academy), Rayne Supple (2014-15 & 2013-14, Champlain Valley Union High School), Luke Salerno (2012-13, Essex High School), Cody Sharrow (2011-12, Mt. Mansfield Union High School), Nick Swim (2010-11, Bellows Free Academy), Adam Picard (2009-10, Essex), Ryan Carter (2008-09, Proctor), Greg Lutton (2007-08, Mt. Abraham Union), and Casey Harman (2006-07, South Burlington) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Nick 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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