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**BONNEY LAKE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE® WASHINGTON SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 4, 2018) — In its 33<sup>rd</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company, today announced Brooke Nelson of Bonney Lake High School as its 2017-18 Gatorade Washington Softball Player of the Year. Nelson is the first Gatorade Washington Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Bonney Lake 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 Nelson as Washington's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award announced in June, Nelson joins an elite alumni association of past state softball award-winners, including Catherine Osterman (2000-01, Cy Spring High School, Texas), Kelsey Stewart (2009-10, Arkansas City High School, Kan.), Carley Hoover (2012-13 D.W. Daniel High School, S.C.), Jenna Lilley (2012-13, Hoover High School, Ohio), Morgan Zerkle (2012-13 Cabell Midland High School, W. Va.), and Rachel Garcia (2014-15, Highland High School, Calif.).

The 5-foot-9 junior right-handed pitcher led the Panthers to a 26-2 record and the Class 3A state championship this past season. Nelson owned a 21-2 mark in the circle with a 0.51 earned run average and 289 strikeouts in 138.1 innings pitched. She fired five no-hitters, including two perfect games, and in early April she struck out 30 batters in a row across two games. At the plate, Nelson batted .654 with 17 home runs, 46 runs scored, 51 runs batted in and a 1.457 slugging percentage.

Nelson has volunteered locally as a youth softball and volleyball coach, and she has donated her time to multiple community service projects through her church.

Nelson has maintained a 3.97 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play softball on scholarship at the University of Washington 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.

Nelson joins recent Gatorade Washington Softball Players of the Year Taylor Rhinehart (2016-17, Woodinville High School), Maggie Gallagher (2015-16, Kennedy Catholic High School), Quinn Breidenbach (2014-15, Enumclaw High School), Kayla Andrews (2013-14, Richland High School), Ashley Thompson (2012-13, Connell High School), Madi Schreyer (2011-12, Woodinville High School), Alyson Ambler (2010-11, Walla Walla High School), Hope Klicker (2009-10, Walla Walla), Amanda Fitzsimmons (2008-09, Auburn Riverside), and Sam Skillingstad (2007-08 & 2006-07, Shadle Park) among the state's list of former award winners.

As a Gatorade Player of the Year, Brooke 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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