

**HURRICANE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WEST VIRGINIA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 21, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Austin Dearing of Hurricane High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade West Virginia Baseball Player of the Year. Dearing is the first Gatorade West Virginia Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Hurricane 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 Dearing as West Virginia's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in May, Dearing joins an elite alumni association of 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, 200-pound senior center fielder was a Rawlings-Perfect Game 2020 Preseason Honorable Mention All-Atlantic Region honoree and is ranked as West Virginia's No. 1 prospect in the Class of 2020 by Prep Baseball Report. Dearing led the Redskins (33-6) to the Class AAA state final in 2019, batting .427 with three home runs, 33 RBI and 37 runs scored. An All-State selection, he also stole eight bases and pitched eight scoreless innings last spring.

Captain of the Hurricane basketball team in 2019-20, Dearing has served as a Spanish tutor for elementary school students and has volunteered locally on behalf of the Special Olympics, clothing drives for the needy and youth sports programs. "Austin has been a four-year starter and every year he was better than the year before," said Hurricane High School coach Brian Sutphin. "His drive and determination have been a joy to watch, and he's been such a great leader and teammate. I think he'll continue to make big strides at the next level."

Dearing has maintained a 4.04 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Marshall University.

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 and field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. From the 12 national winners, one male and one female athlete are each named Gatorade High School Athlete of the Year. In all, 607 athletes are honored each year.

Dearing joins recent Gatorade West Virginia Baseball Players of the Year Ross Mulhall (2017-18, University High School), Drew Hefner (2016-17, Bridgeport High School), Paul Witt (2015-16, Jefferson High School), and Zach Minnick (2014-15, Logan High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit www.Gatorade.com/POY, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/Gatorade.

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