

**GLEN ALLEN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VIRGINIA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (May 28, 2020) — In its 35th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, The Gatorade Company today announced Emerson Aiken of Glen Allen High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Virginia Softball Player of the Year. Aiken is the first Gatorade Virginia Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Glen Allen 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 Aiken as Virginia's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Aiken joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, 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 Tennessee Mojo to a gold medal at the Junior Olympics Cup 16U Division last summer. Aiken won 29 games throughout the summer and last fall for the Mojo, posting a 1.27 earned run average and 236 strikeouts in 160 innings pitched. As a sophomore for the Jaguars in 2019, Aiken struck out 304 batters in 144 innings and compiled a 0.48 ERA. Ranked as the nation's No. 36 recruit in the Class of 2021 by Extra Inning Softball, she enters her senior year with 32 wins, a 0.86 ERA and 452 strikeouts in her prep softball career. As a sophomore for the Jaguars in 2019, Aiken struck out 304 batters in 144 innings and compiled a 0.48 ERA. Ranked as the nation's No. 36 recruit in the Class of 2021 by Extra Inning Softball, she enters her senior year with 32 wins, a 0.86 ERA and 452 strikeouts in her prep softball career.

An award-winning artist, Aiken has volunteered locally with the ASK Childhood Cancer Foundation. She has also donated her time as a youth softball coach. "Emerson has absolutely dominated at the high school level in Virginia," said Brooks Cherry, Aiken's summer ball coach with the Tennessee Mojo. "She is a very hard worker and doesn't take days off. She prepares more than any pitcher I have ever seen at her age."

Aiken has maintained a weighted 4.38 GPA in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play softball on scholarship at the University of Michigan beginning in the fall of 2021.

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.

Aiken joins Gatorade Virginia Softball Players of the Year Bailey Miskin (2018-19, West Springfield High School), Alex Echazarreta (2017-18, Madison High School), Kathryn Sandercock (2016-17, Bishop O'Connell High School), Sydney Nester (2015-16, Carroll County High School), and Maddy Morris (2014-15, Kecoughtan 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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