

**SUN PRAIRIE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE WISCONSIN 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 Maddie Gardner of Sun Prairie High School as its 2019-20 Gatorade Wisconsin Softball Player of the Year. Gardner is the first Gatorade Wisconsin Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Sun Prairie 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 Gardner as Wisconsin'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, Gardner 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-7 senior right-handed pitcher competed for the St. Louis Chaos in several prestigious tournaments last summer and fall. The 2019 Co-Division 1 Player of the Year, Gardner was a two-time First Team All-State selection and led the Cardinals to the 2018 Division 1 state championship. She concluded her prep softball career with 71 wins, a 0.14 earned run average, four no-hitters and 739 strikeouts in 459.1 innings pitched.

Gardner holds state Department of Natural Resources licenses in boating, snowmobiling, hunting and bow hunting & trapping. She has volunteered locally as an elementary school mentor and as a youth softball coach. "Maddie works very hard to get the job done for our team on the pitching mound," said Jamie Olson, head coach of Sun Prairie High School. "She carries the majority of the pressure and weight of our team and it never phases her."

Gardner has maintained a 3.92 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of South Florida.

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.

Gardner joins Gatorade Wisconsin Softball Players of the Year Syd Supple (2018-19, 2017-18 & 2016-17, Oshkosh North High School) and Kayla Konwent (2015-16 & 2014-15, Westosha Central 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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