

**BAYLOR SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE TENNESSEE SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 18, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Sydney Berzon of Baylor School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Tennessee Softball Player of the Year**. Berzon is the first Gatorade Tennessee Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Baylor 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 Berzon as Tennessee'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, Berzon joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Cat 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-11 junior right-handed pitcher led the Red Raiders (27-1) to the Division II-Class AA state championship this past season. Berzon posted a 17-0 record with a 0.47 ERA, surrendering just 11 walks and 16 hits in 77 innings pitched, while striking out 179 batters. An All-Region selection and a Chattanooga Times Free Press Best Of Preps finalist, she also batted .389 with five home runs and 28 RBI. Berzon is ranked as the nation's No. 11 prospect in the Class of 2022 by Extra Inning Softball.

Berzon has served as a prefect in her school's dorms and has volunteered locally on behalf of the J.A. Henry YMCA. "I can't say that I've seen every player in the state, but I would bet the bank that Syd Berzon is the best," said Susan Crownover, head coach at Girls Prep. "She's not only a power pitcher at 70 MPH plus, but she can also command all of her pitches. She's a very good hitter too."

Berzon has maintained a 3.68 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school this fall.

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 works with top sport-specific experts and a media advisory board of accomplished, veteran prep sports journalists to determine the state winners in each sport.

Berzon joins recent Gatorade Tennessee Softball Players of the Year Aubrey Barnhart (2019-20, Goodpasture Christian School), Regan Weekly (2018-19, The King's Academy), and Ashley Rogers (2017-18 & 2016-17, Meigs County High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Berzon has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Berzon is also eligible to submit a 30-second video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$2.7 million across 1,117 organizations.

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 playeroftheyear.gatorade.com, on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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