

**DESERT MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE ARIZONA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 29, 2021) — In its 36<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Wes Kath of Desert Mountain High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Arizona Baseball Player of the Year**. Kath is the first Gatorade Arizona Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Desert Mountain 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 Kath as Arizona's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Kath 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-3, 205-pound senior infielder and right-handed pitcher led the Wolves to a 20-4 record and the Class 5A state championship this past season. Kath posted a .486 batting average with 11 home runs, 34 runs scored and 29 RBI. The state's No. 2 draft prospect as ranked by Perfect Game, he reached base better than 62% of the time and registered a 1.803 OPS.

Kath has volunteered locally on behalf of his church community and as a youth baseball coach. "Wes Kath has exceeded every expectation, on and off the field," said Desert Mountain High head coach Ryan Dyer. "His athletic achievements speak for themselves, but his character and integrity is what truly sets him apart. He is the true definition of a team leader.

Kath has maintained a 3.26 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Arizona State University this fall, but is projected as an early round selection in July's Major League Baseball draft.

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.

Kath joins recent Gatorade Arizona Baseball Players of the Year Brock Selvidge (2019-20, Hamilton High School), Ronan Kopp (2018-19, Scottsdale Christian Academy), Matt Liberatore (2017-18, Mountain Ridge High School), and Boyd Vander Kooi (2016-17, Skyline High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Kath has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Kath 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](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com), on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY) or follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).

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