

**ROGERS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE ARKANSAS BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 29, 2021) — In its 36th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Jackson Wells of Rogers High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Arkansas Baseball Player of the Year**. Wells is the first Gatorade Arkansas Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Rogers 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 Wells as Arkansas' best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in July, Wells 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 5-foot-10, 204-pound senior right-handed pitcher and infielder led the Mounties to a 25-7 record and the Class 6A state championship this past season. Wells compiled an 8-1 record on the mound with a 1.28 ERA and 109 strikeouts in 71 innings pitched. The 2021 Class 6A West Player of the Year, he also posted a .330 batting average with 17 RBI, 15 runs scored and a .450 on-base percentage.

Wells has volunteered locally on behalf of his church youth group and as a baseball camp counselor and instructor. "Jackson Wells is a natural leader who others want to emulate," said Rogers High head coach Matt Melson. "He is the hardest worker I have ever coached and he has put in more time than any athlete I have seen."

Wells has maintained a 3.81 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Arkansas Rich Mountain 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.

Wells joins recent Gatorade Arkansas Baseball Players of the Year Cayden Wallace (2019-20, Greenbrier High School), Blake Adams (2018-19, Har-Ber High School), Jaden Hill (2017-18, Ashdown High School), and Casey Martin (2016-17, Lonoke High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Through Gatorade's cause marketing platform "Play it Forward," Wells has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national youth sports organization of their choosing. Wells 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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