

**OLENTANGY ORANGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE OHIO 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 **Josh Laisure of Olentangy Orange High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Ohio Baseball Player of the Year**. Laisure is the first Gatorade Ohio Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Olentangy Orange 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 Laisure as Ohio'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, Laisure 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-11, 183-pound senior right-handed pitcher and infielder compiled a 10-0 record on the mound with a 1.07 ERA and 89 strikeouts in 60.2 innings, leading the Pioneers to a 26-4 record and a berth in the Division I regional final. A 2021 First Team All-State selection, Laisure also posted a .430 batting average with 27 runs scored, 24 RBI, 16 stolen bases and an OPS of 1.020.

Laisure has volunteered locally on behalf of a variety of school fundraisers while also donating his time as a youth baseball and football coach. "Josh Laisure has a mature, professional approach to academics and athletics," said Olentangy Orange High head coach Tom Marker. "He has a quiet confidence that stems from the behind-the-scenes preparation that he consistently puts in. He has an uncanny ability to impact those around him, and classmates and teammates follow his lead because of his consistent approach."

Laisure has maintained a 3.94 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Wright State University 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.

Laisure joins recent Gatorade Ohio Baseball Players of the Year Kade Kern (2019-20, Archbold High School), Mack Anglin (2018-19, Highland High School), Nick Northcut (2017-18, Mason High School), and Michael Kirian (2016-17, New Riegel High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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