

**U32 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE VERMONT 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 **Owen Kellington of U32 High School** as its **2020-21 Gatorade Vermont Baseball Player of the Year**. Kellington is the first Gatorade Vermont Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from U32 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 Kellington as Vermont'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, Kellington 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-2, 190-pound senior right-handed pitcher and shortstop led the Raiders to a 14-3 record and the Division 2 state championship this past season. The state's No. 1 draft prospect as ranked by Perfect Game, Kellington compiled a 7-0 record on the mound with a 0.22 ERA and 133 strikeouts against just eight walks in 49 innings. An extraordinary 91 percent of all outs he recorded came by strikeout. At the plate, he posted a .667 batting average with seven home runs, 32 runs scored and 26 RBI.

A member of his school's athletic leadership group, Kellington has volunteered as a peer mentor for middle school students. "Owen Kellington is a tremendous presence on the mound," said U32 head coach Geoff Green. "His ability to throw multiple pitches for strikes at high velocity allows him to control each at-bat the opposing team has against him. His approach at the plate has evolved significantly, to the point where he is hitting the ball with authority to all fields."

Kellington has maintained a 3.28 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Connecticut 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.

Kellington joins recent Gatorade Vermont Baseball Players of the Year Jack Ambrosino (2019-20, South Burlington High School), Ian Parent (2018-19, Champlain Valley Union High School), Nick Fitzgerald (2017-18, Lamoille Union High School), and Jordy Allard (2016-17, Hartford High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

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