

**BLUE VALLEY WEST HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE KANSAS BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 3, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Jackson Lovich** of **Blue Valley West High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Kansas Baseball Player of the Year**. Lovich is the third Gatorade Kansas Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Blue Valley West 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 Lovich as Kansas' best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Lovich 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 (2006-07, Seaton Hall Preparatory School, N.J.) and Kris Bryant (2009-10, Bonanza High School, Nev.).

The 6-foot-4, 175-pound senior shortstop led the Jaguars (23-2) to the Class 6A state championship this spring. Lovich batted .430 with seven home runs, 34 RBI and 31 runs scored. Also the Kansas 6A Player of the Year, he went 4-for-4 with six RBI in Blue Valley West's 12-5 win over Washburn Rural in the tournament semifinals. He made a rare pitching appearance in the championship game, worked out of a bases-loaded, no-outs jam and picked up the win on the mound as the Jaguars beat Manhattan, 4-3.

An Academic Honor Roll student, Lovich has volunteered locally both as a peer tutor and as an aid for students with special needs. He also has donated his time as an instructor at Blue Valley West youth baseball and basketball camps. "Jackson is an outstanding young man and talented baseball player," said Blue Valley West High School coach Joe Allison. "He is a student of the game and has been an outstanding teammate. Jackson has helped lead our team to back-to-back state tournament appearances and, this year, to one of the most successful seasons in our program's history. Whether he gets drafted this summer or plays next season (in college), I truly believe he will achieve great things and continue to be successful."

Lovich has maintained a 3.66 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Missouri.

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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Lovich joins recent Gatorade Kansas Baseball Players of the Year Ben Kudrna (2020-21, Blue Valley Southwest High School), Jace Kaminska (2019-20 & 2018-19, Caney Valley High School), and Peyton Carson (2017-18, Shawnee Heights High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Lovich has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Lovich is also eligible to submit a short 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 \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 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) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).

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