

**LAKE CREEK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE TEXAS SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 9, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Ava Brown** of **Lake Creek High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Texas Softball Player of the Year**. Brown is the first Gatorade Texas Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Lake Creek 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 Brown as Texas' best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Brown joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Cat Osterman (2000-01, Cy Spring High School, Texas), Kelsey Stewart (2009-10, Arkansas City High School, Kan.), Carley Hoover (2012-13, D.W. Daniel High School, S.C.), Jenna Lilley (2012-13, Hoover High School, Ohio), Morgan Zerkle (2012-13, Cabell Midland High School, W. Va.), and Rachel Garcia (2014-15, Highland High School, Calif.).

The 5-foot-7 junior right-handed pitcher and first baseman led the Lions to a 41-0 record and the Conference 5A state championship this past season. Brown compiled a 30-0 mark in the circle with a 0.52 earned run average, and she fired a one-hitter with eight strikeouts in Lake Creek's 7-0 win over Georgetown High in the state final. The District 20-5A MVP, Brown struck out 335 batters while walking just 24 in 183.1 innings pitched. At the plate, the 2021 Houston Chronicle All-Greater Houston Hitter of the Year batted .405 with 10 home runs, 12 doubles, 43 runs batted in and a .785 slugging percentage.

Brown has volunteered on behalf of her local chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and as a youth softball coach. "Ava is able to dictate and control a game," said Kelsie McEachern, head coach of Kingwood Park High School. "Her passion shows after every single pitch. At the plate, she is just as dangerous. Calling pitches against her was like playing chess. Each pitch had to be executed precisely or she was going to do some damage."

Brown has maintained a 3.48 in the classroom. She has made a verbal commitment to play softball on scholarship at the University of Florida beginning in the fall of 2023.

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.

Brown joins recent Gatorade Texas Softball Players of the Year Sophia Simpson (2020-21, Barbers Hill High School), Jayda Coleman (2019-20, The Colony High School), Rylee Trlicek (2018-19, Hallettsville High School), and Makinzy Herzog (2017-18, Ridge Point 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, Brown 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. Brown 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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