

**SOUTH PORTLAND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MAINE BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 2, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Andrew Heffernan** of **South Portland High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Maine Baseball Player of the Year**. Heffernan is the third Gatorade Maine Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from South Portland 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 Heffernan as Maine's best high school baseball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Baseball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Heffernan joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Jackson Holliday (2021-22, Stillwater High School, Okla.), Bobby Witt Jr. (2018-19, Colleyville Heritage High School, Texas), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Derek Jeter (1991-92, Kalamazoo High School, Mich.).

The 6-foot-1, 215-pound senior right-handed pitcher and third baseman posted a 4-2 record with a 0.33 ERA to lead the Red Riots to a 12-3 record entering Maine's Class A state tournament. Heffernan struck out 60 batters in 42.2 innings while issuing just four walks. He also hit .431 with 13 RBI and 15 runs scored, posting a 1.101 OPS. He entered the season as the reigning Southwestern Maine Athletic Association's Pitcher of the Year.

Heffernan has volunteered locally as a weekly volunteer with the South Portland Challenger League, an adaptive program for individuals with physical and developmental challenges. He has also participated in SoPo Unite, a group for students at South Portland High School that promotes no drug or alcohol use for all teens. "I think Heffernan is the perfect pick," said Marshwood High School head coach Eric Wells. "He's the ultimate competitor and leader. I've obviously only watched him from the opposite dugout, but he plays the game the way it was meant to be played and his game is as good as anyone I've seen in high school."

Heffernan has maintained an A average in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Merrimack College 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 leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Heffernan joins recent Gatorade Maine Baseball Players of the Year Cody Bowker (2021-22, Thornton Academy), Brady Afthim (2020-21, Windham High School), and Hunter Owen (2019-20 & 2018-19, South Portland High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.