

**MAGNOLIA HEIGHTS SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MISSISSIPPI BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 2, 2023) — In its 38<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation’s best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Cooper Pratt** of **Magnolia Heights School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Player of the Year**. Pratt is the first Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Magnolia Heights 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 Pratt as Mississippi’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, Pratt 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-4, 200-pound senior shortstop and right-handed pitcher led the Chiefs (40-3) to their fifth straight Midsouth Association of Independent Schools Class 5A championship this past season. Pratt posted a 10-0 record with a 0.14 ERA, surrendering just 18 hits and eight walks in 49 innings pitched while striking out 66 batters. He batted .469 with 4 home runs, 50 RBI and 38 stolen bases. A Rawlings/Perfect Game Preseason First Team All-American, he is also a two-time MAIS Class 5A Player of the Year.

Pratt has volunteered locally on behalf of tornado and hurricane relief efforts, youth baseball programs, nursing homes and Second Chances Animal Rescue. “Cooper Pratt fits the bill in most every way possible,” said Brad Haines, head coach Heritage Academy. “He’s got great hands, good speed, he’s athletic—an all-around phenomenal baseball player.”

Pratt has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at the University of Mississippi this fall, but is projected as an early-round selection in July’s Major League Baseball draft.

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.

Pratt joins recent Gatorade Mississippi Baseball Players of the Year Dakota Jordan (2021-22, Jackson Academy), Braden Montgomery (2020-21, Madison Central High School), Blaze Jordan (2019-20, DeSoto Central High School), and Colten Keith (2018-19, Biloxi 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](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).