

**MILLARD SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE NEBRASKA 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 **Camden Kozeal** of **Millard South High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Nebraska Baseball Player of the Year**. Kozeal is the second Gatorade Nebraska Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Millard South 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 Kozeal as Nebraska'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, Kozeal 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 5-foot-11, 195-pound senior shortstop batted .433 with five home runs, 33 RBI and a 1.302 OPS this past season, leading the Patriots to a 19-14 record and a district tournament appearance. Kozeal also stole 22 bases and 20 of his 45 hits went for extra bases. The 2021-22 Gatorade Nebraska Baseball Player of the Year, Kozeal was also a gold medalist with USA Baseball's 18U national team and is ranked as the state's No. 1 player in the Class of 2023 by both Perfect Game and PrepBaseballReport.com.

Kozeal has volunteered his time locally with Open Door Mission, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and with several local youth sports clinics. "Kozeal is one of the toughest outs I've seen in high school baseball," said Bellevue West High School head coach Jason Shockey. "The great thing about him is that he not only covers all five tools, but he's an on-field leader. He's constantly telling people where to go, communicating with the pitcher. He's very much a coach on the field."

Kozeal has maintained a 3.8 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Vanderbilt University 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.

Two-time winner Kozeal joins recent Gatorade Nebraska Baseball Players of the Year Drew Christo (2020-21, Elkhorn High School), Max Anderson (2019-20, Millard West High School), and Cole Evans (2018-19, Grand Island Senior 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.