

**BALLARD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE KENTUCKY SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 9, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Brooke Gray** of **Ballard High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Kentucky Softball Player of the Year**. Gray is the fifth Gatorade Kentucky Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Ballard 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 Gray as Kentucky's best high school softball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Softball Player of the Year award to be announced in June, Gray joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Jordyn Bahl (2020-21, Papillion-La Vista High School, Neb.), Megan Faraimo (2017-18, Cathedral Catholic High School, Calif.), Rachel Garcia (2014-15, Highland High School, Calif.) and Cat Osterman (2000-01, Cypress Spring High School, Texas).

Entering today's state tournament semifinals (June 9), the 5-foot-6 senior left-handed pitcher owned a 27-0 record in the circle with a 0.68 ERA, leading the Bruins (34-1) to the final four. Gray struck out 287 batters while allowing just 85 hits in 175.2 innings through 35 games. The MVP of the 2022 state tournament, Gray was a 2022 First Team All-State selection. She entered the state semifinals with 58 consecutive wins in the circle over the past two seasons.

A member of her school's chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Gray has volunteered locally as a youth pitching coach. "Brooke is by far the best pitcher in Kentucky," said Alan Jones, head coach of Ballard High School. "She works very hard. After she gets done pitching a game, she goes to the gym that night and lifts for her legs. She is a great leader of our team."

Gray has maintained a B average in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play softball on scholarship at the University of Louisville 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.

Gray joins recent Gatorade Kentucky Softball Players of the Year Abby Hammond (2021-22, Lexington Catholic High School), Riley Hull (2020-21 & 2019-20, Pulaski County High School), and Allie Skaggs (2018-19, Ballard 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.

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