

**ANKENY CENTENNIAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE IOWA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (June 3, 2024) — In its 39th year of honoring the nation’s most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Joey Oakie** of **Ankeny Centennial High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Iowa Baseball Player of the Year**. Oakie is the first Gatorade Iowa Baseball Player of the Year to be chosen from Ankeny Centennial High School.

The award, which celebrates the nation’s top high school athletes for excellence on the field, in the classroom and in the community, distinguishes Oakie as Iowa’s best high school baseball player. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport, touting an all-star group of alumni that includes Gary Sheffield (1985-86, Hillsborough High School, Fla.), Alex Rodriguez (1992-93, Westminster Christian School, Fla.), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Max Clark (2022-23, 2021-22 & 2020-21, Franklin Community High School, Ind.).

The 6-foot-3, 195-pound senior right-handed pitcher led the Jaguars to a 30-8 record and a berth in the Class 4A-1 substate championship game last season. Oakie compiled a 7-3 record on the mound with a 1.13 ERA, surrendering just 18 hits in 49.2 innings while striking out 91 batters. He also batted .341 with 20 RBI and a .941 OPS. A 2024 Baseball America preseason First Team All-American, Oakie was also a member of the USA Baseball 18U National Team in 2023. He’s ranked as the No. 41 prospect in the upcoming MLB Draft by Baseball America, he’s also the No. 18 recruit in the Class of 2024 as rated by the Prep Baseball Report.

Oakie has volunteered locally on behalf of the Miracle League, which provides opportunities to play baseball to children and adults regardless of physical ability. “He’s the best arm in the state,” said Joe Balvanz, head coach at Ankeny Centennial High School. “He’s extremely polished on the bump for a high school player. I also think pretty highly of his character.”

Oakie has maintained a 3.55 weighted GPA in the classroom. He has signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball on scholarship at Iowa this fall, but is projected to be an early round selection in July’s 2024 Major League Baseball First Year Player 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.

Oakie joins recent Gatorade Iowa Baseball Players of the Year Trever Baumler (2022-23, Dowling Catholic High School), Aaron Savary (2021-22, Wahlert Catholic High School), Brody Brecht (2020-21, Ankeny High School) and Calvin Harris (2019-20, Western Dubuque High School), among the state’s list of former award winners.

As part of Gatorade’s commitment to breaking down barriers in sport, every Player of the Year also receives a grant to donate to a social impact partner. To date, the Gatorade Player of the Year program has provided more than \$4.9 million in grants to winners across more than 1,900 organizations.

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 X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.

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