

## **HERITAGE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE GEORGIA SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**CHICAGO** (June 7, 2024) — In its 39<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Addie Edwards** of **Heritage High School** is the **2023-24 Gatorade Georgia Softball Player of the Year**. Edwards is the first Gatorade Georgia Softball Player of the Year to be chosen from Heritage 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 Edwards as Georgia's best high school softball 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 Amanda Freed (1997-98, Pacifica High School, Calif.), Cat Osterman (2000-01, Cypress Springs High School, Texas), Rachel Garcia (2014-15 & 2012-13, Highland High School, Calif.) and Ava Brown (2022-23 & 2021-22, Lake Creek High School, Texas).

The 5-foot-4 junior right-handed pitcher led the Generals (28-2-1) to the GHSA Class 4A state title this past season, compiling a 22-0 record along with a 0.15 ERA and 230 strikeouts against just 15 walks in 138 innings inside the circle. The diminutive Edwards confounded opposing hitters with her command and craftiness, posting a 0.46 WHIP, 11 shutouts and two no-hitters. Opposing batters hit just .106 against here. The Class 4A Pitcher of the Year, she was at her best in the postseason, surrendering just two earned runs while fanning 35 over 23 innings in four tournament games.

Edwards has donated her time annually at a youth softball camp and she serves with the Heritage High Partner's Club, which organizes weekly meals and interactions with intellectually and physically challenged students. "Addie Edwards is the best pitcher we have faced each of the last two seasons," said Chad Hayes, head coach at Sonorville High School. "She was dominant on the mound every time we faced her. She has great command, spin and late movement with her pitches, particularly the rise ball. She was simply dominant in leading her team to a state title this season in one of the toughest classifications in Georgia. She's definitely deserving of being the Gatorade Player of the Year."

Edwards has maintained a 3.92 GPA in the classroom. She will begin her senior year of high school 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.

Edwards joins recent Gatorade Georgia Softball Players of the Year Olivia Duncan (2022-23, Buford High School), Amber Reed (2021-22, North Gwinnett High School), Megan Bloodworth (2020-21, Crisp County High School) and Brooke McCubbin (2019-20, Locust Grove 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](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 X(Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://x.com/Gatorade).