

MILLS GODWIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED GATORADE VIRGINA BASEBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 2, 2025) — In its 40th year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Luke Smyers of Mills Godwin High School is the 2024-25 Gatorade Virginia Baseball Player of the Year.

Gatorade Player of the Year is the top honor in high school sports, celebrating the nation's best high school athletes for their success on the field, in the classroom and in the community. The award distinguishes Smyers as Virginia's best high school baseball player, and he joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Gary Sheffield (1985-86, Hillsborough High School, Florida), Clayton Kershaw (2005-06, Highland Park High School, Texas) and Konnor Griffin (2023-24, Jackson Preparatory School, Mississippi).

At the time of his selection, the 6-foot-3, 200-pound senior left-handed pitcher and outfielder had led the Eagles (17-4) to the VHSL Class 5A Region C semifinals. Smyers posted a 7-0 record on the mound, compiling a 0.412 ERA and 109 strikeouts in 51 innings to go with a 0.725 WHIP through 21 games. Ranked as the nation's No. 75 lefty in his class by Perfect Game, he'd held opponents to a .118 batting average and owned a 0.077 FIP entering the regional semis. He also batted .323 with three home runs and 21 RBI to record a 1.103 OPS. The owner of the school record for career strikeouts (315), he went 3-for-4 with a double, a home run and four RBI in Godwin's opening-round postseason victory.

Smyers has volunteered locally on behalf of the Big Feet Meet for intellectually and physically challenged youth and has donated his time extensively on behalf of youth baseball camps and clinics. He has also served as a basketball referee for his school's Integrated Service students. "Luke's knowledge of the game goes far beyond his age," said Josh Gentry, head coach at Mills E. Godwin High School. "His ability to rise to the occasion with every pitch or at-bat supersedes anything that I've seen from a high school player. He took the ball for every big game we had on our schedule this year, striking out 10+ in all those games. He went 24 straight innings without giving up a run and took two no-hitters into the 7th. He has an uncanny knack for thriving under the big lights and it makes him such a special player."

Smyers has maintained a 3.75 GPA in the classroom. He has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play baseball at the University of Alabama this fall.

The Gatorade Player of the Year program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states across 12 different high school sports - 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.

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 \$5.6 million in grants to winners across more than 2,000 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 Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://www.instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://www.facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X(Twitter) at x.com/Gatorade.