

CATOCTIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MARYLAND SOFTBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR

CHICAGO (June 9, 2025) — In its 40<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's most elite high school athletes, Gatorade today announced Taylor Smith of Catoctin High School is the 2024-25 Gatorade Maryland Softball 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 Smith as Maryland's best high school softball player, and she joins an impressive group of alumni that spans CEOs, coaches and star athletes such as Cat Osterman (2000-01, Cypress Springs High School, Texas), Rachel Garcia (2014-15 & 2012-13, Highland High School, Calif.), Ava Brown (2022-23, Lake Creek High School, Texas) and Addisen Fisher (2023-24, Bend High School, Oregon).

The 5-foot-6 senior right-handed pitcher struck out 287 batters in 117.2 innings pitched this past season, leading the Cougars (21-3) to the Class 1A state championship game. Smith posted a 17-1 record with a 0.42 earned run average, allowing just 28 hits and 38 walks. After missing her entire junior season with a knee injury, she also batted .430 with 14 home runs, 40 RBI and a 1.101 slugging percentage.

The president of her class as a sophomore, Smith has volunteered locally with Toys for Tots and Backpacks for Blessings, organizing and packaging food for those in need. She has also donated her time as a peer tutor and as a youth pitching instructor. "Taylor is absolutely dominating in the pitching circle and is a fearsome hitter," said Frank Husson, head coach of Urbana High School. "Taylor commands the strike zone. She is practically unhittable when you combine her command of the strike zone along with superior velocity."

Smith has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a written letter of athletic aid to play softball at the University of Virginia 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](https://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade), Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY) and X (Twitter) at [x.com/Gatorade](https://x.com/Gatorade).

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