

## **Barnhill picks up national player of the year award and is named to 2 All American Teams**

Marietta, Ga. - Nearly 7 months after securing the last out in the Georgia State Championship game, Pope High School is still raking in the awards for fastpitch softball. Because all but 5 states play softball in the spring, national level awards are handed out in June each year to high school players and teams across the nation. The 7 month wait was quite worth it for Pope pitcher Kelly Barnhill as this June has been very fruitful for her making her one of the most decorated players in all of the United States.

After having already picked up region pitcher of the year, county player of the year, state 6-A pitcher of the year, 1<sup>st</sup> team all State, GADC senior all state, GADC player of the year, and the GACA North All Star awards in 2014, Barnhill adds an additional 6 awards in 2015 culminating with 2 All American team nods and a NATIONAL PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD and a spot on the Junior National Team!



On June 5<sup>th</sup>, Kelly picked up her 1<sup>st</sup> of these awards as the Atlanta Journal and Constitution, which covers prep sports for the whole state, selected Kelly as their softball player of the year in the entire state for all classifications.

See story here: <http://highschoolsports.blog.ajc.com/2015/06/05/2014-15-ajc-high-school-athletes-of-the-year-2/>

Later in the month, Barnhill would be awarded the prestigious honor of being named Gatorade player of the year for the state of Georgia. The Gatorade player of the year is the equivalent of the award for the top player in all classifications of Georgia softball throughout the entire state. Kelly is the 1<sup>st</sup> Pope player ever to be named Gatorade player of the year in softball. The last Pope Gatorade player of the year award was Pope Volleyball player Mary Hoey who was a 2 time recipient in 2008 and 2009.

Read the press release here:

<http://www.gatorade.com/poy/profile.aspx?id=15930>

The National Fastpitch Coaches association awarded Barnhill 2 honors with the 1<sup>st</sup> of these being a nod to the "South Region" Louisville slugger all region team (La, Miss, Ala, Ga, Fla, SC, NC, Tenn, Va) of which she made 1<sup>st</sup> team South Region. By being

named to the Louisville Slugger South region team, Barnhill was automatically entered into the pool of players up for All American consideration. On June 25<sup>th</sup>, Barnhill was named 1<sup>st</sup> team Louisville Slugger All American by the NFCA. Kelly is the 1<sup>st</sup> softball all American in Pope history and the 1<sup>st</sup> Pope player to ever win a national level award. The NFCA keeps records on its website dating back to 2012. No player from the state of Georgia has ever been named an All American at any level by the NFCA in this time frame. Kelly is the 1<sup>st</sup> Pope player to ever be named to an All American team.

All region: <https://nfca.org/index.php/awards/louisville-sluggernfca-all-americans/6592-2015-high-school-all-region-teams>

All American: <https://nfca.org/index.php/awards/louisville-sluggernfca-all-americans/6601-2015-nfca-high-school-all-americans>

Kelly's most impressive award also came in the month of June. The national publication, The USA Today, has a sub-branch of the paper that covers high school sports known as USA Today High School Sports. Kelly was named to the USA today All American Family Insurance All USA Team – 1<sup>st</sup> Team. Kelly also was selected by the USA today as NATIONAL PLAYER OF THE YEAR as she was named All USA TODAY PLAYER OF THE YEAR for the entire country!

All USA team: <http://usatodayhss.com/2015/2014-15-american-family-insurance-all-usa-softball-teams>

All USA POY: <http://usatodayhss.com/2015/american-family-insurance-all-usa-softball-player-of-year-kelly-barnhill>

Kelly will end her career as the most decorated softball player in Pope history and one of the most decorated prep athletes to ever attend Pope High School. In the summer of 2015, Kelly will spend the summer playing for the junior national team in the world championships which will occur in July. Upon the end of her summer with the national team, Kelly will continue her softball career at the University of Florida, the 2 time defending division I national softball champions.