

## THREE YEARS OF PERFECTION

For more than 3 years, from 2002 into 2005, the Reds could rarely be beaten, and could never be defeated. The Reds in fact won every single—all 33—must-win games played during a period of 37 months in which the Reds were perfect when the season was on the line. This period, 3 Years of Perfection, is one in which the Reds battled to incredible victories, and bested odds of more than 1 in 8.5 billion to win 33 consecutive games in the face of elimination.

This streak spans slightly more than 3 years—a remarkable 7 postseason runs, including 6 consecutive State Championship titles.

There are nearly 30 Reds that played a major role in this streak, including: 2002 graduates—Justin Ginther, Tyler Tateyama, Lee Griffith, Dylan Ramer, Tyler Krause, and Drew Maulsby; 2003 graduates—Chris Swain, Branden Trujillo; Tyler Garretson, Eric Kelly, Junior Barrios, Mike Juda, and Andrew Anderson; 2004 graduates—Dusty Dominguez and Garrett Walker; 2005 graduates—Josh Noblitt, Jordan Hungenberg, Travis Anderson, Jordan Nation, Brett Myatt, Walker Monfort, and James Stout; 2006 graduates—Shane Dyer, Jared Carlson, Perry Hood, Brent Payne, and Whitman Jones; 2007 graduate—Drew Smith; and 2008 graduate—Kyle Ottoson. The Reds were coached throughout the streak by Coach Danley, Coach Sparkman, and Coach Hughes.

This list excludes the many dozens of Reds' former players that coached and mentored these players as youths in the Eaton Baseball Program, grooming them for their day under the bright lights as varsity ballplayers for the Eaton Fightin' Reds.

*Note: The Reds faced a single-elimination District Tournament (though in some years there was a 3<sup>rd</sup> place game in which the 3<sup>rd</sup> place team advanced as well), and a single-elimination two-game Regional Tournament, followed by a single-elimination Final Four and State Championship Game in the spring during these seasons. In the summer, District and State Tournaments had a double-elimination format, as they still do today.*

### **2002 Spring Postseason**

*The Reds won the Northern Plains League Title in 2002 for the final time (the league would be rolled up into a new, larger Patriot League the following year), and as league champions, the Reds experienced something they wouldn't have again: protection. The Reds thus didn't have to beat Wray and D'Evelyn in the District Tournament in order to advance to the State Tournament, as the Reds would have qualified anyway, but the Reds won those games nonetheless to advance to State.*

The start of 3 Years of Perfection began the following week, as the Reds needed to effectively go win the Metro League Championship in order to win the State Championship, as the bracket lined up with the Reds likely facing 3 Metro teams along the way. The Reds first matched up against Middle Park and needed a near perfect-game from Lee Griffith to advance, as the Reds' first hitter of the game, Tyler Garretson, singled and was knocked in by Tyler Tateyama, for the only score of the game. Griffith allowed just four baserunners throughout the complete-game win, allowing just two hits and no walks, as the Reds held on to beat one of the state's top pitchers to hold on for the 1-0 win over Middle Park for the Reds' win #1 in this streak.



The Reds allowed five 1<sup>st</sup> inning runs in the Regional Championship Game to University, before Dusty Dominguez entered in relief to end the inning. The Reds then stormed back to take the lead in the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, led by a 3-run triple from Branden Trujillo, as Dominguez scattered just two hits to end the game with the Reds defeating University 11-6 for win #2.



The Reds then battled Denver Lutheran in the State Semifinals, and after letting an early 4-0 Reds' lead slide to become a 4-3 score, the Reds brought in Dominguez again, and he allowed just one hit through 4 innings of relief, as the Reds put the game away in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning with Garretson, Trujillo, and Tateyama scoring as the Reds then coasted to a 7-3 win as Dominguez allowed just one base runner in the final 3 innings to advance the Reds to the State Championship Game, and to earn win #3.



The Reds are rarely seen as much of an underdog in spring games, but in this case, the youthful Reds' team was considered a huge underdog coming into the State Championship Game against senior-laden Denver Christian. One Metro League coach in the stands said before the game that he thought Denver Christian had better players at every position on the field, and based on talent alone, he may not have been too inaccurate in that opinion, but the Reds certainly never felt like the big underdogs that they were, on paper at least. Shortstop Trujillo turned a great double play to end a potential scoring threat in the top of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning. Then in the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning, Griffith stranded two runners on base by striking out 3 batters to end the inning. Dylan Ramer then walked and scored on a two-out single by Garretson as the Reds took a 1-0 lead. After Griffith held Denver Christian's top hitters scoreless again in the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, the Reds put together one of their biggest innings during Three Years of Perfection, as all 9 batters either reached base or knocked in an RBI as the Reds batted through the lineup to increase the lead to 6-0 before Eric Kelly stepped to the plate with two outs and two runners on. Kelly then hit a 1-0 fastball deep over the right-centerfield fence as the Reds took a 9-0 lead. Griffith then recorded 2 more strikeouts in a scoreless 4<sup>th</sup> inning, before the Reds increased the lead to 12-0 in the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning. Griffith then recorded another 2 strikeouts and a flyout to end the game with the improbable 12-0 mercy-rule State Championship victory for win #4.



## 2002 Summer Postseason

The Reds won their first two games in the Legion B District Tournament over Sterling and Greeley Central, thereby automatically advancing to the State Tournament. The Reds then rattled off wins at the State Tournament over Greeley Central, Fort Morgan, and Canon City to advance to the State Championship Game. As the Reds were undefeated at State going into the game, the fact that the Reds lost to Pueblo Centennial on Saturday simply meant they had one more opportunity in the State Championship "If" Game on Sunday. The Reds had taken the easy path through the District and State Tournaments thus far, with the Reds not having faced a single game that could end their season, but now the Reds were in a one-game, winner-take-all battle for the State Championship.

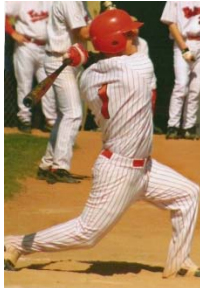
The Reds fell behind 1-0 in the top of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning, but then quickly tied up the game in the Reds' half of the inning. Then after Jordan Hungenberg shut down Pueblo Centennial in the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning, the Reds rallied for 6 runs to take a commanding 7-1 lead, with Travis Anderson hitting a bases-loaded double, followed by Dominguez hitting a 2-RBI double. Hungenberg cruised from there, scattering just 5 hits throughout the entire game as the Reds rolled to the 7-1 Legion B State Championship Game win, and earning win #5 of the streak. This was the first time the Reds had ever won the spring and summer State Championship within the same year; 2002 was the Reds first perfect year.



## 2003 Spring Postseason

The Reds' first year in the Patriot League meant an expanded District tournament, and no protection for league champions as teams from 3 divisions all rolled into this District Tournament.

The Reds started the 2003 Districts against Frederick, and took a commanding early lead as the Reds' first four hitters, Tyler Garretson, Dusty Dominguez, Branden Trujillo, and Chris Swain, all reached base and scored. Josh Noblitt then shut down Frederick, allowing just 3 baserunners in the first 4 innings, before the Reds scored 7 runs to put the game away, led by a 3-run home run from Swain, as the Reds advanced in Districts after win #6.



In a must-win District Tournament quarterfinal, the Reds were trailing Roosevelt 4-2 through 4 ½ innings. Dominguez then led off the bottom of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning with a solo home run. Swain then doubled and scored on a two-out double from Junior Barrios, who then scored along with James Stout after a single from Noblitt as the Reds took a 6-4 lead. Then after Dominguez retired his 11<sup>th</sup> of 12 batters since entering in relief in the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, Dominguez and Trujillo singled, Swain walked, Garrett Walker singled, Barrios walked, and then Noblitt and Jordan Nation singled. Then with two outs, Dominguez and Trujillo singled as the Reds ended the game via the mercy-rule, 14-4, with the Reds' win #7.



*After advancing to the final four of the District Tournament, the Reds could now afford to lose a game and still advance with a win in the 3<sup>rd</sup> place game, and that's the road the Reds ended up taking, with a loss to Erie that forced the Reds to once again have their season on the line.*

The Reds fell behind Bennett 3-1 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, but then Walker tripled in Garretson and Trujillo to tie the game, before Barrios knocked in Walker. Jordan Hungenberg then had 1-2-3 innings in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> inning, and got out of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning with a double play. The Reds added to the lead in the bottom of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning and made the lead 9-4. After a home run cut the Reds' lead to 9-7, Noblitt entered in relief and struck out the game's final batter to send the Reds on to the State Tournament with the victory over Bennett for win #8.



Weather postponed the Reds' Regional Tournament on Saturday, and it was determined that Pagosa Springs would play at Eaton on Sunday. The Reds though started the game, both offensively and defensively, as if they hadn't gotten the memo. The Reds fell behind 5-0 in the top of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning, and then went down in order in the bottom half of the inning. The Reds allowed 2 more runs in the top of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning, and fell behind 7-0. Noblitt then singled in Barrios with two outs in the bottom of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning, before reliever Jordan Hungenberg got out of two scoring threats allowing just one run, as the Reds trailed 8-1 after 4 innings. Hungenberg then retired Pagosa Springs in order in the top of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, before Noblitt and Travis Anderson and Dominguez doubled and Trujillo singled to cut the deficit to 8-4.

Just when it looked like the Reds were going to storm back to victory against the lower-seeded opponent, Pagosa Springs scored 3 more runs in the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning. Then Dominguez came in with the bases-loaded to strike out the next batter to end the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning with the Reds trailing 11-4. Eric Kelly next hit a one-out home run, Noblitt took a hit-by-pitch, Anderson drew a 7-pitch walk, then Dominguez and Trujillo knocked in RBIs as the Reds drew to within four runs at 11-7. Dominguez then stranded a runner at 3<sup>rd</sup> base with a strikeout to end the top of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning. With the season on the line and the Reds down to their final 3 outs, Walker fouled-off a two-strike pitch before singling, Barrios then singled, Noblitt walked, and Anderson doubled to bring the score to 11-9. Garretson then singled on the first pitch and scored Noblitt and Anderson to tie the game and send it into extra innings. After a leadoff infield single was allowed, catcher Swain threw out the runner attempting to steal 2<sup>nd</sup> base, and Dominguez retired the next two batters in order. In the bottom of the 8<sup>th</sup> inning, Barrios walked, and then with two outs, Noblitt singled for his 4<sup>th</sup> time on base in the past 4 innings. Then Anderson stepped up and hit a 2-2 pitch back up the middle to score Barrios and send the Reds to the improbable comeback win. This was also Anderson's 4<sup>th</sup> time on base in 4 innings, and his 3<sup>rd</sup> hit during that period, as the Reds' sophomores led the Reds to arguably the greatest comeback in team history, for win #9.



*The Reds have dedicated a season only once, and it was in 2003, to long-time Coach Martin Hernandez, who passed away during the season. Coach H had chosen to be buried in his full Eaton uniform, a testament to his commitment to the Reds and each of the players. When the players learned before the funeral that they would be saying goodbye to Coach H knowing that he was in full uniform, this made it clear to the Reds' team leaders that they would dedicate themselves to winning another State Championship for Coach H this season. The Reds prefer to dedicate themselves only to top-caliber effort, rather than to results, but the Reds' players demanded this would be a State Championship season, and immediately ordered patches to wear on their sleeves with Coach H's initials, and also ordered a replica of his jersey and hung it in the dugout at every single game. If ever there was any question whether Coach H was still with the Reds, that doubt would have to have been removed late in the Pagosa Springs game.*

*Coach Danley still refers to this game as the Mother's Day Massacre, as the Reds themselves were pretty well massacred on this day, however, amazingly, the Reds still actually came back to win this game, despite being down by 7 runs, on three occasions throughout the game, including being down by 7 runs with only 6 outs remaining in the season. Every great team has that one terrible, once-in-a-decade upset loss out there just waiting to snag them at the appropriate time—and this was probably that game, but the Reds fought back to prevent it from happening; the season just couldn't end like this, not for Coach H.*

The Reds next faced a former Major League All-Star pitcher as the opponent's pitching coach, with his son pitching for Colorado Springs Christian against the Reds. The Reds though rallied for 7 runs in the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning to take an 8-0 lead, led by doubles from Trujillo, Swain, and Noblitt and a home run from Anderson to cap off the inning. Hungenberg then retired the side in a scoreless bottom of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, before Kelly hit a 3-run home run to make the score 11-0. Mike Juda then took the mound in relief in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning and retired the side in order. The Reds then added another 5 runs in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, before Juda completed the shutout win, 16-0, for win #10.



In the State Semifinals against University, the Reds entered the bottom of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning down 4-3, before Anderson beat out an infield single, advanced to 3<sup>rd</sup> base on a single from Garretson, and then scored by inducing a balk to tie the game. The Reds though then allowed two runs and needed a line drive to be hit right at third baseman Noblitt to end the scoring with the bases loaded in the top of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning. Trailing 6-4 with the season on the line, Walker led off with a double on a 1-2 count, but then the Reds recorded two consecutive outs to put the season in real jeopardy. As University fans lined up to storm the field for what would have been University's first win in a league or postseason game against the Reds in nearly 20 years, Noblitt strode to the plate and lined a double to right-centerfield to score Walker. Anderson then fouled off a 1-2 pitch to keep the Reds' season alive, and then singled up the middle to score Noblitt and tie the game. Anderson advanced all the way to third base on an error by the centerfielder. After the Reds' sophomores had once again saved the season for the Reds, senior Garretson calmly walked up to the plate and smacked the first pitch he saw the opposite way into leftfield for the game-winner as Anderson crossed the plate to send the Reds on to the State Championship Game, with win #11 of this streak.



The Reds had come across some bad fortune earlier in the week, having to use up much of their pitching staff with the Regional Championship played on Tuesday, before the Reds then had to win a tough game on Friday before Championship Saturday. The Reds thus would enter the State Championship Game with a tired pitching staff. The Reds though received some good fortune on Friday, as the other two Final Four opponents, La Junta and Manitou Springs, used their top pitchers in a battle that stayed close long enough to force La Junta to leave their ace pitcher in the game for 125 pitches. Like all good teams, the Reds know when they have their ace going and a few runs will be enough to win, and they also know when they'd better show up to score some runs as their pitching is either youthful or tired. On Championship Saturday, the Reds' pitching would be both youthful and tired, and the Reds' offense showed up to play.

Garretson scored in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning, and then with the score tied 1-1 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning, the Reds loaded the bases with walks drawn by Hungenberg, Noblitt, and Anderson, before Garretson tripled and then scored along with Trujillo to give the Reds a commanding 6-1 lead. Dominguez entered in relief in the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning as the Reds' lead had been cut to 6-4. After a double play left the Reds with no one on and two outs in the top of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, Anderson walked, Garretson hit another RBI triple, Dominguez took a hit-by-pitch, Trujillo singled, Swain walked, and Walker singled to put the Reds ahead 10-4. Dominguez then retired the side in order in the bottom of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, before the Reds took a 14-4 lead behind a single from Noblitt, and then a two-out walk from Garretson, a double from Dominguez, a single from Trujillo, and a double by Swain. While the Reds didn't close out the game via mercy-rule and ended up going the full 7 innings with senior Juda entering in relief to close out the game, the Reds held on for the 17-10 State Championship win, earning the Reds' 7<sup>th</sup> must-win game of the spring of 2003, and their 12<sup>th</sup> elimination-game victory since 2002.



### *2003 Summer Postseason*

*The Reds won their first two games of the Legion B District Tournament against Windsor and Niwot to automatically qualify for the State Tournament the following weekend. The Reds then won their first game at State over Northridge, before losing to Evergreen, thereby forcing the Reds to have to win 5 straight games in order to claim the Legion B State Title.*

The Reds knew they would need to score a lot of runs to try to come back and win 5 straight games, and started the 1<sup>st</sup> inning against Arapahoe with two runs, and then maintained the lead with a run in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> innings and two more runs in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, as Dominguez had 4 hits and closed out the 6-3 win for win #13.



In the Reds' 2<sup>nd</sup> must-win game of the day, the Reds were tied 2-2 after three innings against Northridge, and tied again 4-4 after four innings, before the Reds scored the final 7 runs of the game to earn the 11-4, with Perry Hood earning the complete-game win, for win #14.



The Reds again took an early lead, scoring 7 runs in the first 3 innings, before rallying for 5 runs in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning to put the game out of reach over Greeley West. Hungenberg threw a complete game with 10 strikeouts, allowing just two earned runs as the Reds were led by Nation with a triple and 3 RBI at the plate, for win #15.



The Reds then faced Evergreen, who was undefeated in the State Tournament, and would force the Reds to beat them today and again tomorrow in order for the Reds to win State. If the Reds were to lose either game, Evergreen would have won the State Title. The Reds though threw Shane Dyer for 4 innings and took a 4-3 lead before handing the ball in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning to Dominguez to shut down Evergreen. Dominguez did just that, while the Reds added four insurance runs to win 8-4 to advance to a one-game winner-take-all State Championship Game the next day, following this 16<sup>th</sup> win.



The Reds took an early 3-0 lead over Evergreen, but then fell behind 6-3 in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning. The Reds though rallied back and batted through the lineup to score 6 runs, led by a 2-run double from Noblitt as the Reds raced to a 9-6 lead. After Evergreen fought back to make it 9-8 in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, Dominguez struck out another batter and induced a game-ending groundball that sent the Reds to their 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive spring/summer State Championship with win #17.



## 2004 Spring Postseason

*The Reds were seeking to do something accomplished only once before in Colorado history, to win 4 straight spring State Championships, dating back to 2001 (the Reds did not win the summer 2001 State Title, or else this record streak of perfection would have been even longer). The Reds though had to first get through the first round of District Tournaments.*

The Reds faced Burlington for the third time in four days, as the Reds had swept a league doubleheader a few days earlier against this opponent to end the regular season. In this must-win District Tournament game, Jordan Hungenberg threw a complete-game one-hitter with 10 strikeouts, as the Reds scored early and often to win 10-0 via the mercy-rule for win #18 in this streak of perfection under pressure.

*The Reds then faced Weld Central in the final four of Districts, and did not have to win the game, as the Reds could have lost and still had an opportunity in a 3<sup>rd</sup> place game to advance to State. The Reds though took the easy path and beat Weld Central to qualify for State with this victory, and preventing putting their season on the line again this weekend.*

After falling behind to Machebeuf 2-0 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning of the Regional Semifinal, Dusty Dominguez entered in relief and struck out a batter with the bases loaded to end the inning. After Dominguez shut down Machebeuf in order in the top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, Brett Myatt led off with a walk, and then scored after Josh Noblitt singled and Dominguez knocked in the Reds' first run. Dominguez then struck out 4 batters in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning alone, as one strikeout ended up bouncing to the backstop, but Dominguez ended the inning without allowing a run. Hungenberg then led off with a double and was knocked in by Walker Monfort to tie the game. Dominguez then got out of trouble in the top of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, as catcher Jared Carlson tagged out the potential go-ahead run on a suicide squeeze attempt, and then with the bases loaded, Dominguez induced a groundout to third baseman Myatt to keep the score tied 2-2. Shane Dyer then led off the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning by drawing a walk, before Hungenberg doubled to knock in the winning run and send the Reds on to the Regional Championship Game, earning win #19.



*In one of the few postseason games that the Reds did not need to win the week before, in the championship game of the District Tournament, where the Reds and Valley had already qualified for the State Tournament regardless of the result, Valley defeated the Reds and celebrated the win in a way that made the Reds hope that they might be fortunate enough to run into Valley in the State Tournament. Fortunately, the bracket was seeded such that the Reds faced Valley in the Regional Championship, and the Reds were going to make sure the opposing players wouldn't be chanting while jumping on the plate after this game.*

Through 5 innings though, the Reds trailed 3-2 despite a strong pitching performance from Noblitt, before Garrett Walker singled to lead off the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning. Dyer then drew a full-count walk, Hungenberg singled, and a wild pitch brought Walker across with the tying run. Monfort then singled to knock in the two go-ahead runs, before Travis Anderson singled and Myatt hit a 3-run home run to put the game out of reach at 8-3. After Valley closed the score to 8-5 in the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, Dominguez took the mound and retired the next 3 batters in order, including a game-ending strikeout in the dirt that Carlson threw to first baseman Dyer to send the Reds on the Final Four with win #20.





The Reds faced Faith Christian the next weekend in the State Semifinals, and the Reds got off to an early 5-0 lead. After a Faith Christian rally to attempt to tie the game failed, a Faith Christian batter ran down the baseline on a routine play and intentionally stepped on first baseman Hungenberg's Achilles tendon. The umpires correctly ejected the player immediately and this ejection would come back to matter later in the game. Noblitt threw two innings of scoreless relief, before Dominguez entered with runners on 2<sup>nd</sup> base, and struck out the substitute for this ejected player, hitting 2<sup>nd</sup> in the lineup, to end the 6<sup>th</sup> inning. After Faith Christian tied the game in the top of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, Dominguez completed the inning with 3 strikeouts to send the game into extra innings. In the top of the 8<sup>th</sup> inning, the ejected player's spot came up again and forced Faith Christian to put down a 1-out sacrifice bunt. After the Reds intentionally walked Faith Christian's top hitter, Dominguez perfectly threw the pitch up-and-in on an attempted steal of home as catcher Carlson applied the tag to send the tied game to the bottom of the 8<sup>th</sup> inning. Dyer then hit a two-out double, Hungenberg was intentionally walked, and then Jordan Nation singled to right-centerfield to bring in the winning run and send the Reds to the State Championship Game after earning this win #21.



The Reds lined up against La Junta in the State Championship Game for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in the past 4 years, following Reds' wins in 2001 and 2003 over La Junta. The Reds again took an early 5-0 lead through the first inning and a half, but then La Junta rallied to make the score 5-3 in the bottom of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning. After La Junta closed the gap to 5-4 in the bottom of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, Dominguez entered in relief to retire the side and keep the Reds ahead by a run. Singles by Myatt and Noblitt, followed by a double from Dominguez in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning made the score 7-4, but then an unearned La Junta run in the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning made the score 7-5. La Junta's ace pitcher, who would go on to be drafted, then entered in relief after having pitched the day before, and Hungenberg led off with a single to start the 5<sup>th</sup> inning. Then after being moved over to 2<sup>nd</sup> base, Hungenberg scored on a single by Monfort to rightfield as the Reds moved ahead 8-5. Dominguez then retired the side in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning by fielding a bunt followed by two more strikeouts to end the inning.

The Reds' first baseman was targeted for the 2<sup>nd</sup> straight game, as La Junta's batter threw an elbow at first baseman Dyer that dislocated Dyer's elbow (though Dyer held on for the out) and cost him a chance to be in the State Championship pileup, as he was taken immediately to a hospital. After La Junta players started chirping and using defamatory language about Dyer and the Reds, Dusty Dominguez took off his glove so he could hold up both hands to show La Junta six fingers, and mouthed "six pitches, just six" indicating the remaining length of La Junta's season.



Shortstop Noblitt called the infield together amidst the hostile environment created by their players and fans, before Dominguez took the mound with an opportunity to close out yet another State Championship. Dominguez induced a weak grounder to 2nd base on his first pitch, before delivering on his promise to strike out the next batter on 3 straight pitches to send the Reds to another State Championship pile-up, in the Reds' 22<sup>nd</sup> straight elimination-game victory.



## 2004 Summer Postseason

The forecast for the Legion B District Tournament included heavy amounts of rain over the weekend, and thus the Reds went all out to throw their top pitchers in the first two games to beat University and Boulder and automatically qualify for State the following weekend. Had the Reds lost a game, they likely would have had postponements allow their top pitchers an extra day of rest before being needed in must-win game, but by winning the first two games, the Reds simply walked out of Districts (as did the other 3 teams that qualified) and decided to come back the next weekend at State to duke it out there. The Reds though lost their first game at State to Boulder, and thus would be tasked with winning 6 straight games if the Reds were to win their 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive Legion B State Championship (and 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive spring/summer State Championship).

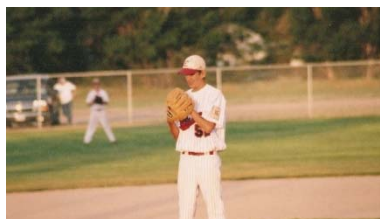
The Reds certainly had a tough schedule ahead of them, but the Reds knew they had to start just winning games one at a time. First up for the Reds was Skyview. The Reds handed the ball to Dyer, and he threw a complete-game one-hitter, as the Reds easily won 8-1 to advance after securing elimination-game consecutive win #23.



The Reds had ended La Junta's spring season in each of the 3 opportunities that the Reds had against La Junta over the previous four years. Now facing a must-win game in a summer tournament, maybe the results would be different. Then again, maybe not. The Reds were trailing 6-2 in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, before the Reds rallied for 5 runs led by a double from James Stout, and singles from Myatt, Carlson, Noblitt, Hungenberg, and Monfort as the Reds held on for the 7-6 win to once again defeat La Junta at State, this time for win #24.



With the Reds starting to get low on their pitcher availability, they turned to an 8<sup>th</sup> grader, Kyle Ottoson, with the season on the line against Fort Morgan. Ottoson threw a complete-game 4-hit shutout, recording 9 strikeouts, as the Reds scored 6 runs in the first two innings and coasted to an 8-0 win, for the Reds' 25<sup>th</sup> straight elimination-game win.



In a battle against Boulder, the Reds managed a mere 3 hits, but those hits from Hungenberg, Monfort, and Jordan Nation would prove enough as Myatt shut the door in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning on the mound as the Reds held on for a 2-1 victory to advance to the State Championship Game after win #26.



The Reds then faced Evergreen for the State Championship for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row. And for the 2<sup>nd</sup> straight year, the Reds would have to beat Evergreen twice in order to win State, given that Evergreen was undefeated coming into this game. Jordan Hungenberg though hit an early grand slam, and then threw a one-hit, complete-game shutout at Evergreen to give the Reds a 6-0 win and force a decisive, winner-take-all battle the following day, after win #27.



After falling behind 4-0 in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning, the Reds battled back against Evergreen, and in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, Monfort singled to tie the game, before Noblitt singled to give the Reds the lead, then Myatt doubled and Hungenberg hit a home run to give the Reds a commanding 9-4 lead. The Reds added 3 insurance runs later, as Dyer shut down Evergreen and then Noblitt took the mound and threw two scoreless innings as the Reds won soundly 12-4, to complete a 4-game sweep of Evergreen over the last two seasons in the State Championship and State Championship "If" Games. This was the Reds' 28<sup>th</sup> consecutive win in elimination games.



*This completed the Reds 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive "perfect year", with State Championships, 6 in all, in both the spring and summer each year.*

### *2005 Spring Postseason*

*The Reds had to win their first two District Tournament games in order to advance to the final four of Districts and faced Estes Park in the opening round.*

The Reds started the 2005 District Tournament against Estes Park. Brett Myatt struck out 4 batters through the first two scoreless innings, while the Reds' offense scored 4 runs, led by a triple from Myatt in which he scored as well. Myatt then retired the side in order in the top of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, before the Reds put the game out of reach with 7 runs in the bottom of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning. The Reds went on to win 14-0 as Myatt threw a complete-game 3-hitter in the mercy-rule victory, which represented win #29 for the Reds during this streak.



The Reds then faced Valley and threw Shane Dyer at them. Dyer allowed just one walk and two singles through the first 5 innings, holding Valley scoreless. The Reds though hadn't scored yet either as they entered the bottom of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, until Jordan Nation took a two-strike hit-by-pitch, James Stout singled, and Walker Monfort doubled to give the Reds a 1-0 lead. Then with two outs, after Josh Noblitt had been intentionally walked, Jared Carlson delivered a single to give the Reds a 3-0 lead. Dyer then was aided by a line drive double-play to Myatt in the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning to end that frame, before Dyer then struck out the side in order in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning to finish the complete-game win for the Reds. Dyer struck out 13 batters in the win, allowing just two walks and three hits in the 3-0 win, which was win #30 for the Reds.



*The Reds then lost a District Semifinal game to Roosevelt, forcing the Reds to then win the 3<sup>rd</sup> place game in order to extend their season into the State Tournament.*

The Reds got off to a fast start against University, with Travis Anderson doubling and Myatt singling him home in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning. Freshman Kyle Ottoson ended scoring threats in each of the first two innings by recording three straight outs as the Reds led 3-0 following RBI hits from Monfort and Anderson in the bottom of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning. University then scored 2 unearned runs in the top of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, before Ottoson again retired 3 straight batters to end the inning. Ottoson recorded his 6<sup>th</sup> strikeout of the game in the scoreless top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, before Nation tripled and scored on a ball hit by Stout to give the Reds a 4-2 lead. The Reds then turned an inning-ending double play in the top of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, before Myatt singled, and then with two outs, Carlson singled, Jordan Hungenberg took a hit-by-pitch, and Dyer singled to increase the Reds lead to 6-2. Dyer then took the mound in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning and struck out the side in order, and then after a double play in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, Dyer recorded another strikeout to end the game and send the Reds on to the State Tournament with win #31.



With the Mother's Day Massacre still fresh in these player's minds, it was clear that the Reds weren't going to risk coming out flat against Pagosa Springs this time. The Reds took an 11-2 lead through 2 innings, led by 2 doubles from Noblitt and a double by Anderson. Hungenberg struck out 7 straight batters through the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, as the Reds added 5 more insurance runs to secure the 16-2 win, advancing the Reds to the Regional Championship with win #32.



The Reds then went into the Regional Championship facing Holy Family. After 3 innings, the Reds trailed 1-0, but then Dyer singled, Nation reached base, and Stout hit a sacrifice fly to tie the game. The Reds then took a commanding lead in the top of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, as Anderson reached base, Noblitt singled, Carlson singled, Hungenberg walked, and then Dyer and Nation singled as the Reds took a 5-1 lead. In the top of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, the Reds put the game away as Dyer walked, Stout singled, Monfort walked, and then Myatt singled and Noblitt doubled with two outs to increase the Reds' lead to 9-2. Dyer then retired the side in order to finish the complete-game 3-hitter, earning the Reds the Regional Championship, and earning the Reds their 33<sup>rd</sup> consecutive victory in must-win games.



### *3 Years of Perfection*

The era of Three Years of Perfection was exactly that: perfect. The Reds started the streak as one of the premier programs in the state with recent State Titles in 1994, 1995, 1998, and 2001, as well as a Legion State Title in 1997. During this streak though, the Reds more than doubled the number of State Championship Trophies in the Eaton Baseball trophy case, moving them from an impressive 5 State Titles, to a truly remarkable 11 State Titles. The Fightin' Reds Baseball Program leaped ahead to move into a very unique place in State history, as well as among the very top programs nationally, following this amazing 33-game win streak in the face of elimination.

While Three Years of Perfection ended nearly a decade ago, it helped perpetuate many other Reds' streaks that still continue, including all-time state records for the most consecutive State Tournament appearances (32 straight) and Regional Championships (22 straight). It also extended many active win streaks against individual opponents. More importantly than anything though, these Three Years of Perfection made opponents learn to expect to fail in close ballgames against The Pinstripes, and made the youthful players that have worn The Pinstripes ever since dream of excelling as these men did, over the course of Three Years of Perfection. **Congratulations to the dozens of Reds that battled to earn 3 Years of Perfection, which represents one of the most remarkable achievements in the history of one of the nation's most remarkable programs.**



# Reds' 33 Consecutive Elimination-Game Win Streak, 2002-2005

All games below were postseason battles, with the season on the line

#1	2002	May 11	Middle Park	Butch Butler - Greeley	W	1-0
#2	2002	May 11	University	Butch Butler - Greeley	W	11-6
#3	2002	May 17	Denver Lutheran	Regis Field - Denver	W	7-3
#4	2002	May 18	Denver Christian	All City Stadium - Denver	W	12-0
#5	2002	August 04	Pueblo Centennial	Fort Morgan	W	7-1
#6	2003	April 29	Frederick	Eaton	W	11-0
#7	2003	April 29	Roosevelt	Eaton	W	14-4
#8	2003	May 03	Bennett	University	W	9-7
#9	2003	May 11	Pagosa Springs	Eaton	W	12-11
#10	2003	May 13	Colorado Springs Christian	Northglenn	W	16-0
#11	2003	May 16	University	All Star Park - Lakewood	W	7-6
#12	2003	May 17	La Junta	All Star Park - Lakewood	W	17-10
#13	2003	August 01	Arapahoe	Niwot	W	6-3
#14	2003	August 01	Northridge	Niwot	W	11-4
#15	2003	August 02	Greeley West	Niwot	W	13-5
#16	2003	August 03	Evergreen	Niwot	W	8-4
#17	2003	August 03	Evergreen	Niwot	W	9-8
#18	2004	May 04	Burlington	Eaton	W	10-0
#19	2004	May 15	Machebeuf	Jackson Field - Greeley	W	3-2
#20	2004	May 15	Valley	Jackson Field - Greeley	W	8-5
#21	2004	May 21	Faith Christian	Runyon Field - Pueblo	W	6-5
#22	2004	May 22	La Junta	Runyon Field - Pueblo	W	8-5
#23	2004	July 29	Skyview	Fort Morgan	W	8-1
#24	2004	July 30	La Junta	Fort Morgan	W	7-6
#25	2004	July 30	Fort Morgan	Fort Morgan	W	8-0
#26	2004	July 31	Boulder	Fort Morgan	W	2-1
#27	2004	July 31	Evergreen	Fort Morgan	W	6-0
#28	2004	August 01	Evergreen	Fort Morgan	W	12-4
#29	2005	May 03	Estes Park	Eaton	W	14-0
#30	2005	May 03	Valley	Eaton	W	3-0
#31	2005	May 07	University	Eaton	W	6-2
#32	2005	May 14	Pagosa Springs	Runyon Field - Pueblo	W	16-2
#33	2005	May 14	Holy Family	Runyon Field - Pueblo	W	9-2



Middle Park



University



Denver Lutheran



Denver Christian



Pueblo Centennial



Frederick



Roosevelt



Bennett



Pagosa Springs



CS Christian



University



La Junta



Arapahoe



Northridge



Greeley West



Evergreen



Evergreen



Burlington



Machebeuf



Valley



Faith Christian



La Junta



Skyview



La Junta



Fort Morgan



Boulder



Evergreen



Evergreen



Estes Park



Valley



University



Pagosa Springs



Holy Family

THREE YEARS OF PERFECTION  
2002-2005  
33 CONSECUTIVE ELIMINATION-GAME WINS