



KOEHLER COMMITTS TO TOP SCHOLARSHIP AT NEW MEXICO JUNIOR COLLEGE

"You don't have to play 'perfect', you have to try 'perfect'." – Tony La Russa

"Perfection is not attainable, but if we chase perfection we can catch excellence." – Legendary football coach Vince Lombardi

Few freshmen are put into a situation where the entire season is on the line, and even fewer are asked to score the game-tying run in the 7th inning on a play where a perfect hook slide would have to follow a perfect break on the ball and an all-out sprint to the plate. Ryan Koehler was asked for just that in 2012, and he delivered, providing the Reds the tying run in the State Tournament to extend the Reds' season and ultimately lead them to the State Championship victory.

It would be unreasonable to put a player into this position as a pinch runner only months out of middle school if this player hadn't already single-handedly won the Reds the Legion D State Championship on the mound the previous summer, proving he had what it took to perform in big situations. It wasn't an accident that jersey #1 was reserved for the young Koehler – when the lights get bright, and many succumb to the pressure, Koehler flat out shines.

Since those early days of Koehler's career, he has continued to perform greatly, often flirting with perfection, at the plate, in the field, on the basepath, and on the mound. The rewards of this have already earned Koehler and his teammates a literal handful of State Championship Rings, numerous individual awards for Koehler, including selection to the Colorado Rockies' Top 40 Futures Game in 2014, and most recently...

Ryan Koehler has just committed to a top scholarship at New Mexico Junior College, a baseball program that consistently ranks atop the nation in team batting average, setting the highest marks in national history within the past few years.

Only days after scoring the big run, Koehler became an everyday starter for the Reds in the outfield, and has frankly provided as many, if not more, key RBI hits than any Red in history. As only a sophomore and junior, his batting average always ranked #1 or #2 on the team, and if a critical run needed to be driven in, every Eaton Red was checking to see how quickly Koehler's turn at bat was coming up. He has been instrumental through all of Eaton's State Championships during his career – pick any series of at-bats of Koehler's, and it will look as if it were chosen from a season-long highlight reel.

While Koehler won't post a batting average of 1.000 this spring, or next year at New Mexico Junior College, don't tell Koehler that, as he's a determined competitor that meticulously focuses on each at-bat and each pitch, expecting to get a hit (often for extra bases), and demonstrating his constant pursuit to play the perfect game, and complete the perfect season. The Reds went 42-0 in the summer of 2013, but to Koehler it was only an undefeated season, not a perfect season, as he could have played more perfectly on the rare occasion that he failed to get a big hit. That focus and determination, both during the season and off-season, to train to pursue perfection has now led Koehler to a college opportunity where chasing perfection is the norm.