

FOUR heaven's sake



The Eaton Reds celebrate their fourth consecutive Class 3A state championship after beating La Junta 8-5 at Runyon Sports Complex in Pueblo. **CHRIS SINCLAIR / sinclair@greeleytrib.com**

Eaton wins fourth straight championship



Eaton 8
L. Junta 5

GAME NOTE
The Reds won their fourth straight Class 3A state championship and their seventh overall.

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PUEBLO — Dusty Dominguez winged his glove into the air just as La Junta's Thomas Baird whiffed Saturday afternoon.

● **Injured player / C4** It was Dominguez's way of expressing his feelings, and that of his Eaton teammates after their 8-5 victory over La Junta to win the Class 3A State Championship on Hobbs Field at the Runyon Sports Complex.

The Reds finished the season 22-3, hoisting a Class 3A state-title trophy for the fourth straight year, seven times overall. La Junta finished 21-4.

"I just wanted to get the last two outs," said Dominguez, who came on in relief in the third inning, giving up just one run and one hit.

"Their fans were saying some things

statebaseball

that were making me mad, and it made me pitch better."

The thought of teammate Shane Dyer exiting the field on a stretcher with a dislocated elbow also inspired Dominguez, a senior. Dyer was injured in a collision at first base with La Junta's Jonathan Apodaca.

"I wanted to get the last two outs for Shane," Dominguez. "I just wanted the ball."

A 20-minute delay left the Tigers anxious and free-flowing with verbal jabs at the Reds early on.

"Yeah, there was a lot said," said Eaton starter Josh Noblitt, who was 3-for-4 with two runs scored, 2 RBI and two doubles.

"I think one of the best things about the game is that our kids were able to keep their composure, regroup and get the job done," Eaton coach Jim Danley

said. "The mentality of Dusty Dominguez comes to mind. He just kept getting better and better. I know he was tired because of how much he threw yesterday."

Dominguez was no worse for wear, taking charge earlier than expected, and answering La Junta's call by retiring 10 of the last 11 batters he faced.

"I didn't want to go to him that early, but his slider and his curveball were both working pretty good," Danley said. "See, our idea was to try and keep (Sean) Gleason from having a big role in the game."

Gleason, who stared down Noblitt and Dominguez after being hit with pitches, also came on in relief, throwing three innings and retiring seven of the nine batters he faced — Jordan Hungenberg and Walker Monfort singled in the fifth, producing Eaton's final run.