

# Eaton keeps faith to advance to final

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PUEBLO — Josh Noblitt looked good getting off the bus, but it was Shane Dyer who looked best in the bullpen at Hobbs Field at the Runyon Sports Complex Friday afternoon. Eventually, Noblitt and Dusty Dominguez took center stage from Dyer with Eaton baseball coach Jim Danley analyzing every move. The trio of Eaton pitchers, work-

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ing by committee, held off Faith Christian 6-5 in eight innings of the Class 3A state championship semifinals. Eaton (21-3) will take on La Junta at 3:30 p.m. today for the state title. Faith Christian (19-5) couldn't even steal the game from the Reds, who made the most out of very little offensively. "Oh yeah, definitely, I feel

relieved," said Eaton's Jordan Nation, who lined the game-winning single in the eighth inning, sending Matt Rundle to third. Rundle scored when Faith Christian right fielder Hondo Carbajal bobbled the ball. Noblitt, who pitched two innings of relief, Dominguez and Danley all agreed. "We really didn't hit anything hard until the last inning," said Danley,

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# Errors, umpire's calls add to bizarre game

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whose team was hitless from the fourth until the eighth inning, leaving him a little leery about his decision to start Dyer. "I'm glad this is over," said Noblitt, who was 1-for-2 with two runs scored. "It was pretty intense." Added Dyer: "This is huge. I knew we weren't getting many hits, but I also knew I had guys behind me to make plays and that we would get the hit when we needed it. "I felt pretty good all day. We're playing (today), and that's huge." Danley wasn't real big on waiting so long to name his starting pitcher. "Dyer is just a sophomore, but his knuckle-curve was cracking in the bullpen. I also wanted to save the staff to be ready for just about anything." Anything, and everything, happened in the Reds' victory. ■ Eaton had just six hits and only one earned run in the victory.

■ Faith Christian attempted to go ahead in the eighth when Kyle Chamberlain tried to steal home, but was tagged out when Eaton catcher Jared Carlson tagged him out after he hurled Carlson. "I noticed that he leaped over the plate and was yelling at Carlson," Danley said. "That would have been a tough way for a sophomore catcher to end the season." Eagles coach Ralph Nance begged to differ with homeplate umpire Bruce Bradshaw about Chamberlain touching home plate. "He scored, no doubt in my mind, but he (Bradshaw) said he hurled the catcher to avoid the tag," Nance said. "There was no tag. The catcher didn't have the ball yet." ■ Faith Christian's Phil Vigil was ejected from the game for malicious contact with Eaton first baseman Jordan Hungenberg in the fourth inning while running out an infield



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Eaton pitcher  
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grounder. Hungenberg was banged up on the play, but walked it off. Vigil later apologized for the hit. "They run as clean of a program, but kids sometimes do things they regret later," Danley said. ■ Faith Christian starting pitcher Hudson Beasley was ejected after the game for having words with Bradshaw. ■ A strong 35 mph wind blowing straight in from right field played havoc with several fly balls, two which fooled Dominguez and accounted for two unearned runs in the first inning. ■ Bradshaw also ruled that Faith Christian batter Joby Schaffer didn't avoid a Dominguez pitch in the eighth after being hit in the thigh. He eventually struck out. "It was definitely a crazy game," Danley said. "I think we eventually had to just sit on their fastball pitcher." ■ Faith Christian's Brennan

Bonati appeared to smack a double in the third, but he was ruled out when the Reds appealed he hadn't touched first base. Faith Christian's Josh Mamer came on in relief in the sixth, suffering the loss. Dominguez also took the hill in the eighth, threw a wild pitch that allowed the Eagles to tie the game, but picked up the win. "That pitch was a slider," Dominguez said. "After that, I just tried to relax and start throwing strikes again. "I knew anything could happen." **GAME NOTES** ■ **COMING FROM BEHIND:** The Reds fell behind 1-0 in the first on a throwing error by Dyer, but stormed back with three runs on three hits — an RBI single by Dominguez, an infield grounder by Dyer and an RBI single by Hungenberg. "We get those three runs without any real big hits and it was the difference for a long time," Danley said.

**TODAY'S TITLE GAME**

- **WHO:** Eaton (21-3) vs. La Junta (21-3)
- **WHAT:** Class 3A State Baseball Championship
- **WHERE:** Runyon Field, Pueblo
- **WHEN:** 3:30 p.m. today
- **PROBABLE STARTERS:** Eaton, Dusty Dominguez, 6-0; La Junta, Johnathon Apodaca, 6-1.

■ **TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ERRORS:** The Reds also scored two in the second, both unearned as Faith Christian committed three errors, two by shortstop Schaffer on one play. ■ **ON TARGET:** Dominguez struck out six in three innings of work, facing just 11 batters. When asked if he would pitch the title game, Dominguez answered, "I don't know. Coach Danley knows. I'll pitch as much as he wants me to."

**Class 3A Semifinals**  
Eaton 6, Faith Christian 5

Faith Christian	103	00010	- 5 8 5
Eaton	320	00001	- 6 6 4

FCHS: Hudson Beasley (4H, 1ER, 3BB, 2SO), Josh Mamer (4th, L, 3-2, 2H, 0ER, 1BB, 2SO), and Phil Vigil, Chris Johnson (4th). RBI: Brennan Bonati 2, Mamer. EHS: Shane Dyer (6H, 3ER, 2BB, 3SO), Josh Noblitt (4th, 1H, 0ER, 1BB, 1SO), Dusty Dominguez (6th, W, 6-0, 1H, 1ER, 1BB, 5SO), 2B: Dyer, Noblitt. RBI: Dyer, Jordan Nation, Dominguez.

**Class 3A Semifinals**  
La Junta 2, D'Evelyn 1

DHS	010	00000	- 1 2 1
LHS	000	00101	- 2 5 0

DHS: Jay Soneff (L, 5H, 2ER, 6BB, 9SO) and Curtis Culligan. RBI: Tom Kasten. LHS: Sean Gleason (W, 2H, 1ER, 2BB, 11SO) and Bryce Wadleigh. RBI: David Thompson, Caleb Guerrero.