

Comeback kids of Eaton take state B

By JOHN LA PORTE

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Eaton was not about to exit quietly from the state B Legion baseball tournament.

Knocked into the losers' bracket in the first round Wednesday in a 10-1 loss to Boulder, Eaton came all the way back to face Evergreen for the championship.

In the tournament's double-elimination format, Eaton would have to beat Evergreen twice to take the title and did just that, winning 6-0 Saturday and 12-4 Sunday.

And the Sunday game was a reflection of Eaton's resilience as Evergreen went up 4-0 in the first inning only to wind up on the short end of the score after a furious Eaton comeback.

Along the way, Eaton edged Boulder 2-1 Saturday after beating Fort Morgan 8-0 Friday. Those results put Boulder in third and Morgan fourth; both teams, as well as runner-up Evergreen and the champs, received trophies.

"I was real proud of our kids," Eaton coach Jim Danley said. "They battled back really hard."

It was nice to see the players re-focus after playing poorly in the first game of the tournament, he added; they played hard in the last several games.

Pitcher-first baseman Jordan Hungenberg stepped up in

major fashion for Eaton Saturday and Sunday.

Saturday he got his team off to a 4-0 lead with a grand slam and pitched a one-hit shutout.

Sunday he helped break the game open with a two-run homer.

"Jordan's been one of those guys that's been waiting to bust out, and he sure picked the right time," Danley said.

The champs had another hero Sunday as Josh Noblitt came on in relief to slam the door on any Evergreen ideas of a rally.

He struck out two and gave up two hits in 1 2/3 innings of scoreless relief.

Noblitt, Danley said, has been outstanding in short relief all year, with a sub-1.0 earned run average, a tough-to-pick-up sidearm fastball in the 80s and a slider that is probably his best pitch.

Evergreen's only hit in the first championship game was a first-inning single by Tim Wulf.

For Eaton, adding to Hungenberg's slam were James Stout with a double and a single, Jarred Carlson with a pair of singles and Travis Anderson and Noblitt with a single each.

Sunday Hungenberg hit a homer and a single, Brett Myatt a double, Noblitt and Walker Monfort two singles each and Anderson, Carlson, Stout and Dusty Kruse a single apiece.



John La Porte/Fort Morgan Times

Hoisting the hardware

Eaton B Legion team members celebrate with their trophy after emerging from the losers' bracket to win the state tournament in Fort Morgan Sunday.

For Evergreen, Wulf hit three singles and Jasch Gerard and Joel Bong a single each.

Myatt scattered five hits Saturday as Eaton avenged its first-round loss to Boulder to get into the championship.

Dustin Cady hit two singles,

Danny Blair, Nathan Ansbaugh and Ryan Penney a single apiece for Boulder.

For Eaton, Hungenberg, Monfort and Jordan Nation had a single each as Boulder's Conor Vidulich threw a three-hitter.