

## 10 Greatest Major Comeback Wins in Eaton Baseball Postseason History



Eaton Fightin' Reds (21-2)  
*Dominguez*

Background

Comeback Summary

Final Score

Greatest Major Comeback Win in History

2003 Regional Semifinals

At Eaton Baseball Field

Reds Trail by 7 Runs

May 11, 2003

vs.

*Pitchers of Record*



Pagosa Springs Pirates  
*Stone*

Every team has that one game lingering out there where everything that can go wrong does, it occurs about once every 500 games, and unfortunately today was that day for the Reds.

The Reds enter the opening round of the 2003 single-elimination State Tournament game as clear favorites, having won the 2001 and 2002 State Championships, coming into this game as the high seed. The game was to be played in north Denver, but after being rained out on Saturday, Pagosa Springs asked to play the game on a dry field in Eaton on Sunday rather than pay for another night of hotels in hopes of the field in Denver drying out. This Sunday was Mother's Day, and this game would go on to be known by the Eaton coaches as the Mother's Day Massacre.

The Reds get down 5-0 in the top of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning, and 7-0 in the top of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning, and 8-1 in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning. A few errors, some infield hits, and a couple of walks lead to the worst start of a spring postseason game in Eaton history.

The Reds cut the deficit to 8-4 in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning with doubles by Josh Noblitt, Travis Anderson, Dusty Dominguez, and a single by Branden Trujillo. However in the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, Pagosa Springs scores 3 more runs before Dusty Dominguez enters in relief and gets a bases-loaded strikeout.

Entering the bottom of the 6<sup>th</sup>, with only 6 outs left in their season, the Reds trail 11-4.

Eric Kelly hit a one-out solo home run to cut the deficit to 11-5. Josh Noblitt then took a hit-by-pitch, and fellow sophomore Travis Anderson fouled off a full-count pitch before drawing a walk, then after Tyler Garretson reached base, Dusty Dominguez grounded into a fielder's choice to knock in a run and beat the throw to 1<sup>st</sup> base to prevent what would have been an inning-ending double play. Branden Trujillo then hits an RBI single on a 1-2 count to cut the deficit to 11-7.

In the top of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, Dominguez strands a runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> base with a strikeout to end the scoring threat and maintain the 4-run deficit as the Reds stepped to the plate in the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning down 11-7 with just 3 outs left in their 2003 season.

Garrett Walker led off with a single after fouling off a 1-2 pitch, then Junior Barrios singled, and after a flyout for the first out, Josh Noblitt drew a full-count walk. Sophomore Travis Anderson then hit a 2 RBI double to cut the deficit to 11-9, and put the tying runs in scoring position. Tyler Garretson then singled on the next pitch to tie up the game 11-11 and send it into extra innings.

After allowing a leadoff single in the 8<sup>th</sup> inning, catcher Chris Swain threw out the runner trying to steal 2<sup>nd</sup> base, and then Dusty Dominguez struck out the next two batters. In the bottom of the 8<sup>th</sup> inning, Junior Barrios drew a one-out walk, and then with two outs, Josh Noblitt singled, and then Travis Anderson singled to give the Reds the unthinkable, a postseason victory after having trailed by 7 runs with only 6 outs to go.

The Reds had been massacred, not once but twice on this day, but they were moving on anyway toward a 3<sup>rd</sup> straight State Title. They had dedicated the season to Coach Martin Hernandez after he passed away earlier in the season and then was buried in his Eaton uniform, and the Reds didn't let him down with yet another great comeback during 2003.

Eaton 12, Pagosa Springs 11





Eaton Fightin' Reds (21-0)

Mossberg

Background

2<sup>nd</sup> Greatest Major Comeback Win in History

2013 Elite Eight

At Butch Butler Field

Reds Trail by 8 Runs

May 18, 2013

vs.

*Pitchers of Record*



La Junta Tigers (16-6)

Schreibvogel

Comeback Summary

The Reds had faced La Junta in the State Championship Game in 2000, 2001, 2003, and 2004, with the Reds pulling off memorable wins over future Triple-A minor league pitchers in '01, '03, and '04, including a 15-inning win in 2001. La Junta then faded from the State Tournament scene for a decade, but in 2013 the Reds lined up against the Tigers in the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the State Tournament.

The Reds fall behind 3-0 through 3 innings, and then allow another 5 runs in the top of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning to trail 8-0 halfway through the game. Ryan Koehler then reaches base to lead off the bottom of the 4<sup>th</sup> inning, before Colton Lind grounds into a fielder's choice, then Matt Burkart reaches base, Marcus Longwell singles, Trent Sieg draws a walk, and Britten Abbott doubles and Bryce Dyer knocks in a run to cut the deficit to 8-4. The Reds then allow one run in the top of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, before Jake Nelson leads off with a walk, Koehler reaches base and Lind doubles, before Sieg hits a two-out single and Abbott doubles again to bring the Reds within a run. The Reds then allow one more run in the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, but storm back with a single from Nelson, a double from Koehler, and then Lind drives them both in to tie the game, before Burkart singles to give the Reds an 11-10 lead. After a walk by Longwell, Sieg hits a sacrifice fly, before Abbott singles and Dyer doubles to increase the lead to 14-10. Adam Mossberg then retires the side in order to preserve one of the greatest comebacks in State Tournament history and qualify the Reds for their 21<sup>st</sup> consecutive Final Four.

Final Score

Eaton 14, La Junta 10



3<sup>rd</sup> Greatest Major Comeback Win in History  
1993 Legion B District Tournament  
At Butch Butler Field in Greeley  
Reds Trail by 7 Runs  
July 29, 1993



Eaton Fightin' Reds (25-4)  
Martin

vs.

*Pitchers of Record*

Greeley Central Wildcats  
Chacon

Background

In the early 1990's, the Reds didn't qualify for the summer Legion B State Tournament on an annual basis. In fact, going into the 1993 summer season, the Reds had won only one Legion B State Tournament game in over 30 years, and only qualified for the tournament twice during that stretch.

After having already defeated Greeley West in the opening round of the District Tournament, a win in this game today would put the Reds within just one game of qualifying for the State Tournament.

However, the Reds were facing a future Major League pitcher in Shawn Chacon and spotted him 8 runs in the first two innings.

The Reds trailed 8-1 going into the bottom of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning. The Reds were throwing ace Cory Martin in this game, and would stay with him so long as the Reds could get back into the game quickly, otherwise they would remove Martin to use him in an elimination game the following day.

Comeback Summary

Matt Anderson led off the bottom of the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning with a hit-by-pitch, and then Jeff Kundert reached on a fielder's choice and both scored after a two-out single by Brig Noffsinger, followed by a walk by Tony Winter and then Matt Rice reached on an error to cut the deficit to 5 runs.

Cory Martin then retired the side in order in the top of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning, before Martin led off the Reds' half of the inning with a walk, then Matt Anderson singled, Aaron Prior singled, Jason Sullivan walked, Brig Noffsinger reached on a fielder's choice, and Tony Winter hit a two-out home run to tie the game.

Cory Martin then retired 3 of 4 batters in the 4<sup>th</sup> inning and retired the side in order in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning. The Reds then took their first lead of the game as Brig Noffsinger singled and Winter took a hit-by-pitch to chase Central's ace pitcher and future Major Leaguer from the mound, and then with two outs, Martin doubled to knock in 2 runs and then came around to score as well on an error and wild pitch.

Cory Martin then retired 3 of 4 batters in the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, and Jason Sullivan added another insurance run by drawing a walk and scoring on an error. Martin then retired 3 of 4 batters to end one of the Reds' most improbable comeback wins in history and advance the Reds in Districts where they would later go on to qualify for the State Tournament.

Final Score

Eaton 12, Greeley Central 8



Eaton Fightin' Reds (33-9)  
*C. Dyer*

Background

4<sup>th</sup> Greatest Major Comeback Win in History

2011 NCBL District Tournament

At Eaton Baseball Field

Reds Trail by 6 Runs

July 16, 2011

vs.

*Pitchers of Record*



Loveland Indians  
*Hall*

Comeback Summary

The Reds, defending NCBL Champions, are hosting the NCBL District Tournament again in 2011 and face Loveland in the first round of pool play. The Reds can't afford to drop any games in the pool play format without being at risk of failing to advance to the NCBL Final Four, which would be played a few days later.

Walks, errors, and bad luck have the Reds trailing 10-4 going into the bottom of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning.

Britten Abbott led off with a single, then Cory Dyer doubled, Keenan Hall singled, Bryce Dyer reached base, Adam Mossberg reached base, Weston Hager hit a sacrifice fly, and then with two outs Marcus Longwell singled, Tyler Batt walked, Trent Sieg walked, and Britten Abbott hit a 3-run triple to give the Reds an 11-10 lead.

Cory Dyer then retired 3 of 4 batters in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, and retired the side in order ending the game with two strikeouts.

Final Score

Eaton 11, Loveland 10





Eaton Fightin' Reds (28-18)  
*S. Dyer*

Background

5<sup>th</sup> Greatest Major Comeback Win in History

2005 Legion B State Tournament

At Eaton Baseball Field

Reds Trail by 5 Runs

July 29, 2005

vs.

*Pitchers of Record*



Roosevelt Roughriders  
*Montoya*

The Reds graduated a number of key players the spring of 2005 that had led them to both spring and summer State Championships in 2002, 2003 and 2004, en route to winning a remarkable total of 33 straight must-win games. Upon their graduation, the local media used the headline: "End of an Era", as if the Reds were somehow going to fade away. Sure, the Reds enter the game with their worst summer record in a decade at just 28-18, but in the postseason, the Reds are a pretty safe bet.

With only one returning pitcher and key starter, in Shane Dyer, the Reds were going up against senior-laden Roosevelt with a once-in-a-century class of players that were all going on to play on scholarship in college. The Reds were not only underdogs coming into the game, the Reds then got behind 5-0 going into the 5<sup>th</sup> inning. Roosevelt was throwing a no-hitter at the Reds with a 5-run lead in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning.

Comeback Summary

Cody Ball reached base, Jared Carlson hit an RBI double, and then Shane Dyer hit a 2-RBI single. After the Reds drew walks and rallied to tie the game, Scott Harris hit a single to centerfield to score the go-ahead run.

From there, Shane Dyer took the mound in relief and struck out 5 batters, including 3 batters to end the game in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning and preserve the 1-run lead throughout the end of the game.

Final Score

Eaton 7, Roosevelt 6



Eaton Fightin' Reds (30-3)  
Garza

Background

Comeback Summary

Final Score

6<sup>th</sup> Greatest Major Comeback Win in History  
**1988 Legion B District Tournament**  
At Commerce City  
Reds Trail by 5 Runs  
**July 30, 1988**  
vs.  
*Pitchers of Record*



Loveland Indians  
McCloughan

The Reds enter a must-win elimination game in the District Tournament against Loveland, with the winner advancing to the State Tournament, and the loser seeing its season coming to an end. The Reds enter this District Tournament having only qualified for the State Tournament once in the past 25 years.

The Reds trail 6-1 going into the top of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning with the season on the line.

The Reds had to mount one of their best 7<sup>th</sup> inning rallies of the decade, which was capped off with Ray Garza delivering a two-out single to give the Reds the lead. Garza then took the mound in the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning and retired the final two batters to earn the win and send the Reds on to their 2<sup>nd</sup> Legion State Tournament of the era.

Eaton 7, Loveland 6



Eaton Fightin' Reds (14-2)

Garza

Background

Comeback Summary

Final Score

7<sup>th</sup> Greatest Major Comeback Win in History

1988 District Quarterfinal

At Old Eaton Baseball Field

Reds Trail by 5 Runs

May 6, 1988

vs.

*Pitchers of Record*



Highland Huskies

Barry

The Pagosa Springs game in 2003 certainly represented that decade's worst combination of bad luck and poor play for the Reds, the 1980's "worst win" was this Highland game, in which everything that could go wrong did, including 40mph wind gusts arising out of nowhere making it nearly impossible to throw a strike or catch a flyball or make an accurate throw as the Reds took the field in the 5<sup>th</sup> inning.

In the wildest game of the decade, and quite possibly in the history of Eaton Baseball, the Reds found themselves trailing Highland 22-17 after the most awful inning in Eaton history brought in 16 Highland runs in the top of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning. The Reds entered the top of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning just 3 outs away from 10-running Highland and qualifying for the State Tournament, and now trailed by 5 runs with just 9 outs left in the season.

Dino Nolin then led off the bottom of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning by reaching on an error. Jim Reeman then singled, and Randy Cordova singled, before Henry Hissrich and Craig Kindsfater singled, and Ray Garza reached on an error to bring the Reds within 2 runs. Ray Garza then retired 3 of 4 batters in the top of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, and did so again in the top of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning.

Then in the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, still trailing by 3 runs, Craig Kindsfater led off with a single, then Ray Garza walked, Joey Haythorn singled, and then Matt Ehn drew a 1-out walk to bring the Reds within a run, before Dino Nolin drew a walk and Jimmy Reeman singled to score 2 runs for the game-winner and his 5<sup>th</sup> RBI of the day.

Eaton 23, Highland 22





Eaton Fightin' Reds (22-9)  
*Lawhead*

Background

Comeback Summary

Final Score

8<sup>th</sup> Greatest Major Comeback Win in History

**1981 Legion B District Tournament**

At Butch Butler Field in Greeley

Reds Trail by 5 Runs

**July 29, 1981**

vs.

*Pitchers of Record*



Greeley West Spartans (14-10)  
*Trujillo*

In the first round of the Legion B District Tournament, the Reds trailed Greeley West 6-1 in the bottom of the 6<sup>th</sup> inning. Greeley West was throwing a no-hitter at the Reds through 5 innings.

Down by 5 runs with only 5 outs left, Mike McKay reached on an error, then after a two-out error, Doug Leafgren singled to score McKay and break up the no-hitter. Then after another error and two singles, Bill Kurtz stepped to the plate with the bases loaded, down by one run, with two outs. Kurtz then singled to leftfield to score both Mike Rosales and Mike Anderson to give the Reds the lead.

The Reds then held Greeley West scoreless in the top of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning to advance in the winner's bracket of the District Tournament.

Eaton 7, Greeley West 6





Eaton Fightin' Reds (43-6)  
Foos

#### Background

9<sup>th</sup> Greatest Major Comeback Win in History  
2010 Legion B State Championship  
At Monarch High School in Louisville  
Reds Trail by 4 Runs  
August 2, 2010



Greeley West Spartans  
Buchanan

vs.  
*Pitchers of Record*

Even going into this game, a great comeback would be needed for the Reds, as they had suffered their worst defeat in history the day before in the first State Championship Game, losing 23-0 in a game where not only did everything go wrong that could, but that was then compounded by Reds' errors. Sure, the grade of the field was such that the pitching rubber was actually 4 inches below the level of the plate, as opposed to 10+ inches above as is normally the case, and the Reds entered the tournament knowing many of their pitchers would struggle on this mound, but that still was no excuse for arguably the worst game in Reds' history.

However, the Reds were undefeated going into that game, so frankly a big loss was better than suffering a one-run, extra-inning loss that could have used up some of the Reds' remaining pitching. Sidearmers Tyler Sieg and Dante Foos have won every game in the tournament for the Reds thus far, and Foos would be counted on again today.

Greeley West feels more than comfortable of an assured win today after some profound comments in the newspaper after yesterday's win. The Reds though feel plenty confident going into this situation as well.

The Reds score 3 runs in the top of the first inning, but then give up 7 runs in the bottom of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning before Dante Foos takes the mound to end the rally, with the Reds trailing 7-3 going into the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning. Foos, with a 13-0 record on the summer, but pitching on almost no rest, matter-of-factly states to the team upon entering the dugout: "that's it, they're done scoring today."

#### Comeback Summary

To win this game, two things clearly had to happen, first the Reds had to score some runs, and Foos had to live up to his proclamation.

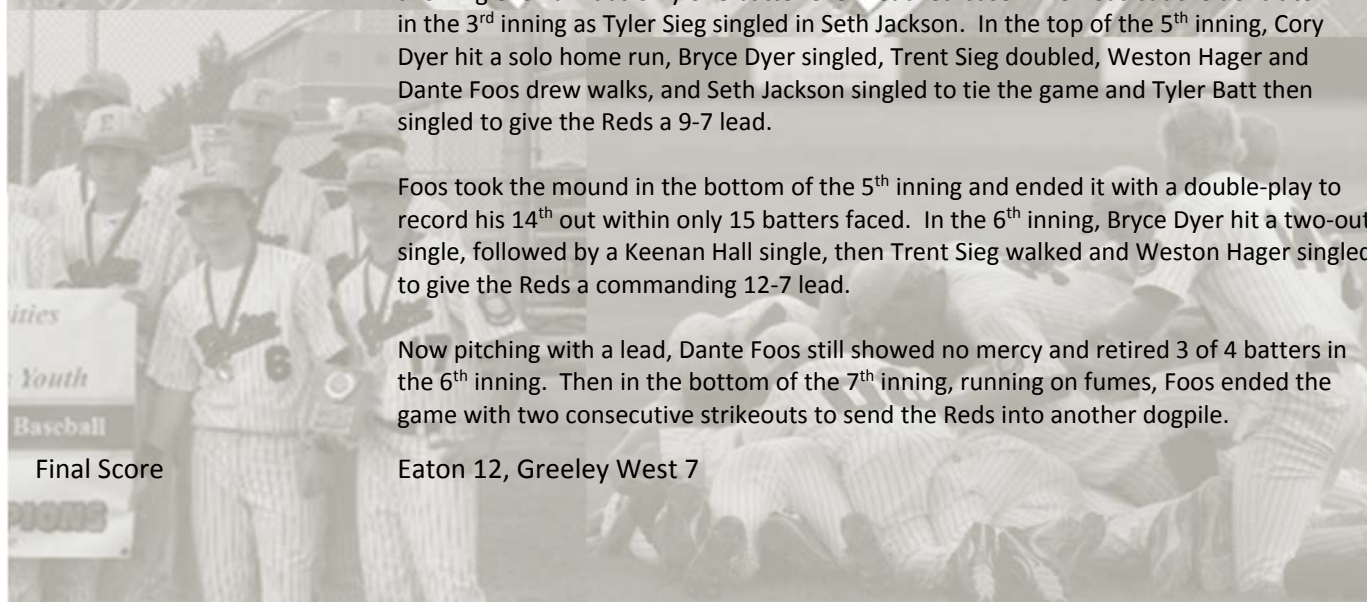
Foos did his job in setting down Greeley West batters in the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> innings without allowing even a hit as only one batter even reached base. The Reds cut the deficit to 7-4 in the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning as Tyler Sieg singled in Seth Jackson. In the top of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning, Cory Dyer hit a solo home run, Bryce Dyer singled, Trent Sieg doubled, Weston Hager and Dante Foos drew walks, and Seth Jackson singled to tie the game and Tyler Batt then singled to give the Reds a 9-7 lead.

Foos took the mound in the bottom of the 5<sup>th</sup> inning and ended it with a double-play to record his 14<sup>th</sup> out within only 15 batters faced. In the 6<sup>th</sup> inning, Bryce Dyer hit a two-out single, followed by a Keenan Hall single, then Trent Sieg walked and Weston Hager singled to give the Reds a commanding 12-7 lead.

Now pitching with a lead, Dante Foos still showed no mercy and retired 3 of 4 batters in the 6<sup>th</sup> inning. Then in the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning, running on fumes, Foos ended the game with two consecutive strikeouts to send the Reds into another dogpile.

#### Final Score

Eaton 12, Greeley West 7





Eaton Fightin' Reds (28-8)  
Noblitt

10<sup>th</sup> Greatest Major Comeback Win in History  
2004 Legion B State Tournament  
At Fort Morgan Legion Field  
Reds Trail by 4 Runs  
July 30, 2004



La Junta Tigers

vs.

*Pitchers of Record*

#### Background

The Reds enter this must-win elimination game of the Legion B State Tournament facing La Junta, the same team the Reds had to defeat in the 2001, 2003, and 2004 spring State Championship Games (*the Reds defeated Denver Christian to win the 2002 State Championship*).

The Reds graduated one of their all-time greats in Dusty Dominguez a couple months earlier, and now are facing a La Junta team that's comprised of all-stars from throughout Southeastern Colorado.

The Reds enter the 5<sup>th</sup> inning trailing 6-2 with the season on the line.

#### Comeback Summary

The Reds put up consecutive great at-bats to mount the comeback win, with James Stout hitting a double, then consecutive singles from Brett Myatt, Jared Carlson, Josh Noblitt, and Jordan Hungenberg to tie the game at 6-6.

Walker Monfort then hit the go-ahead single to give the Reds a 7-6 lead, which they would hold onto, behind closer Josh Noblitt, earning yet another win over La Junta.

#### Final Score

Eaton 7, La Junta 6