



The Best Thing I Saw at State: Celebration, Confusion, and 15 Innings of Chaos

A walk-off celebration in the ninth inning turned into the longest state championship baseball game in LHSAA history.

By Ethan W. Anderson

The *Best Thing I Saw at State* is a new column that brings to life the moments that make high school sports so meaningful. Through the stories, emotions, and details that often go unseen at the state championships, it captures what the box score can't.



SULPHUR — For a few seconds Friday night, after nine innings on Field 41 at McMurry Park, the Division I Select State Championship appeared to be over. Or at least everyone inside the stadium thought it was.

Catholic had the bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth inning with a full count and the Bears one pitch away from a third straight state championship. Brother Martin pitcher Drake Amedee missed high for ball four, forcing home what appeared to be the winning run.

The reaction was instant.

Photos by Jackson Reyes / The Advocate



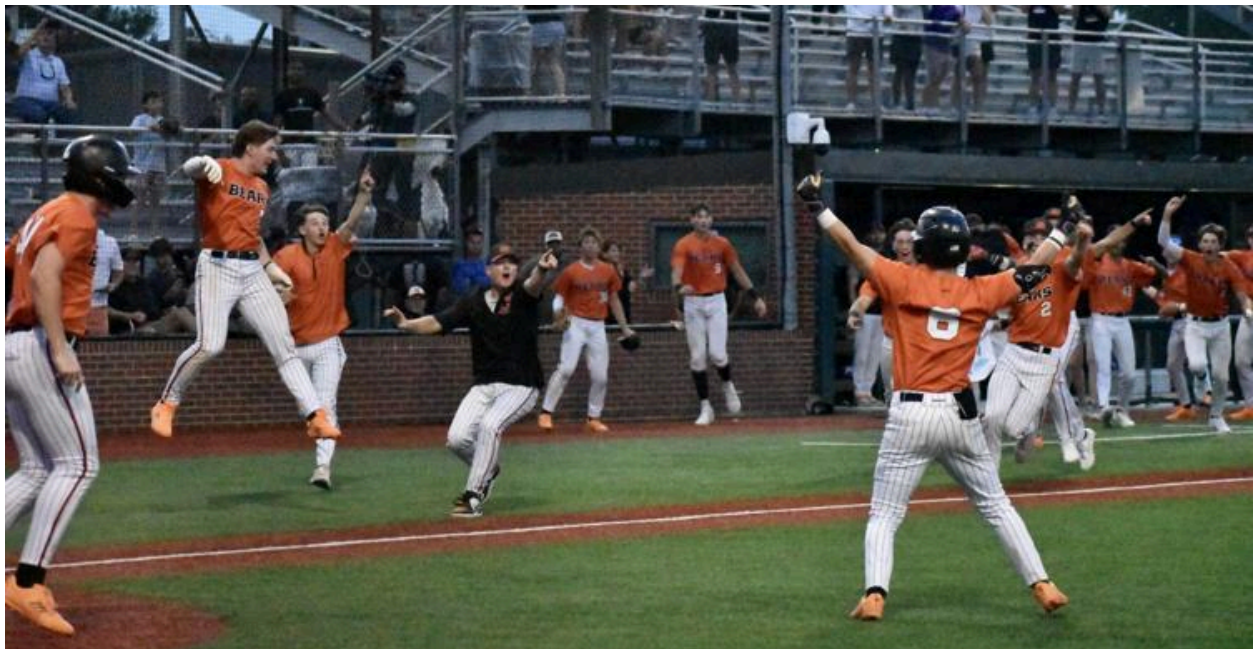
Players sprinted out of the Catholic dugout. Gloves flew into the air. Fans rose to their feet. A dogpile started forming near the mound as the Bears celebrated what looked like a walk-off championship victory. Then suddenly, everything stopped.

At first, nobody understood what was happening. Coaches began yelling from both dugouts. Players pointed toward first base. Umpires gathered as confusion spread section by section throughout McMurry Park. Then the realization hit.

Catholic batter Jude Schneider had never touched first base after drawing the bases-loaded walk. Instead of running through the bag, Schneider turned toward the mound and joined the celebration. Brother Martin catcher Tyler Durand still held the baseball and fired it to first base for the appeal out. The game was not over.

In a matter of seconds, Brother Martin went from believing its season had ended to realizing it had been given the one thing it wanted the most... another chance. Catholic, meanwhile, had to walk back to the dugout after celebrating a state championship that suddenly no longer existed.

It felt like the entire stadium experienced emotional whiplash at the exact same moment.



The scene became even more unforgettable through the lens of Advocate writer/photographer Jackson Reyes, whose perfect angle from the first-base line captured the chaos in a single frame. In the photo, Schneider is already celebrating with his arms raised as the Catholic dugout empties onto the field behind him. At the same time, a Catholic coach can be seen yelling and pointing toward first base after realizing the mistake before almost anyone else in the stadium understood what had happened. The image somehow freezes both emotions at once: celebration and panic in the exact same second.



And somehow, after all of that chaos, both teams still had to keep playing baseball.

That was the moment the game transformed from an incredible state championship into something people will probably talk about for decades. The game moved into the 10th inning. Then the 11th. Then the 12th.

By that point, everyone inside the stadium realized they were witnessing something unusual. Even in the press box, people started researching LHSAA history between innings to see where the game ranked among the longest championship games ever played.

Then another inning passed.

And another.



At some point, the game stopped feeling normal altogether. It became survival.

Pitch counts climbed. Players kept digging deeper between innings. Fans grew restless. Every baserunner felt like the one who would finally end the madness, yet somehow nobody could deliver the final blow.

Catholic had already celebrated a championship once. Brother Martin had already believed its season was over once. Yet both teams somehow kept responding inning after inning as if the emotional roller coaster had never happened.

Catholic starter Mills Richardson settled in after a rough first inning and delivered nine innings. Tanner Forbes followed with six more innings in relief, throwing more pitches than he had all season.

Brother Martin answered every challenge.

Every time exhaustion felt like it might finally decide the game, somebody made another play. Another strikeout. Another diving stop. Another inning survived.



That's the beauty and cruelty of baseball. There is no clock to save you. No overtime designed to force an ending. You just keep playing until somebody earns it.

Friday night, neither team wanted to lose. Nearly five hours after the first pitch, the breakthrough finally came in the bottom of the 15th inning.

Myles Auxt led off with a single before Jude Schneider, the same player at the center of the ninth-inning chaos, dropped down a sacrifice bunt to move the winning run into scoring position.

Then Harrison Kidder stepped in and ripped a line drive into center field. Auxt raced home from second base, and for just a split second, there was hesitation before the celebration began again, almost like everyone inside McMurry Park needed to make sure the game was truly over this time.

Then came the release.

The dugout emptied. Another dogpile formed. Fans erupted. Only this time, there was no confusion waiting around the corner. Catholic had finally secured a 2-0 victory in the longest baseball state championship game in LHSAA history.

The box score will always show 15 innings, but it will never fully explain what the game actually felt like. It will never explain the shock of watching a championship celebration disappear in real time or the disbelief that slowly spread through the stadium as inning after inning passed without an ending.

And maybe that's why this was the best thing I saw at state. Not because it became the longest baseball state championship game in LHSAA history. Not because of the chaos in the ninth inning or the walk-off celebration in the 15th. It was because, somewhere deep into the night, the game stopped being just about baseball.

One team celebrated too early. The other thought its season was over. Yet both kept responding to every moment anyway, and that's what made Friday night unforgettable.

The box score will forever read that Catholic defeated Brother Martin in 15 innings.

But anyone inside McMurry Park knows that's only part of the story. What they really witnessed was something bigger, a game that refused to end quietly, and a night no one there will forget.

Author's Note:*In my role as the Director of Communications, I have the unique privilege of attending nearly all sanctioned LHSAA State Championship events. Although the schedule is demanding, I have the privilege of seeing student-athletes from all walks of life, united by two things: their participation in Louisiana high school sports and their pursuit of a state championship. In my first year in this role, I've gained a deeper appreciation for high school athletics and for all the dedication that goes into making each season and event possible. Although my current role involves less writing than my previous positions, it has given me the opportunity to return to something I've always loved. While much of my work now focuses on press releases and public statements, I also have the chance to reconnect with my passion for feature writing, this time highlighting what I consider the purest form of sport: high school athletics. The goal is to highlight the best thing I saw at each state championship and share the unknown stories behind these events, capturing memorable moments for student-athletes, coaches, administrators, officials, and fans.*