

## Legion baseball: East claims third straight state title

**T-BIRDS STILL RULE: Scott's two-run homer keys win over Chugiak.**

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Every time Joey Scott hits a home run, his little brother Terryl runs to fetch it. And he marks the spot for his big brother.

But of all the home runs Terryl, 8, watched soar over fences throughout his brother's young American Legion Baseball career, the clout he hit Saturday at Mulcahy Stadium was arguably the hardest -- and the most important.

Scott crushed a two-run homer in the first inning to help East win its third consecutive American Legion Baseball state championship with 5-1 victory over Chugiak. His ball landed on Anchorage Football Stadium and, as always, Terryl was there to stamp its final roll.

"Twenty-yard line," Terryl said, mocking the motion of his sibling's home run swing. "He hit that one hard."

Scott sent it flying on an 0-1 fastball delivered by Chugiak's Conor Spink and the blast put East ahead 2-0. It cleared the Tudor Road Bingo sign and just kept going.

"I felt like I had someone else with me at the plate," said Scott, who dedicated the home run to his grandpa, who lives in Florida. "It felt good."

At first, East head coach Tony Wylie didn't think the ball had the distance.

"I didn't know if it was good enough," Wylie said. "But I think all my jumping up and down helped a little."

East's jovial coach couldn't have been more proud of his players because they never threw in the towel. East could have sealed the championship earlier in the day, but Chugiak crushed East 15-6, forcing one final game in the double-elimination tournament for the title. East committed four errors in the loss, while Chad Nading gave up nine earned runs and eight walks in just 2 1/3 innings.

"This probably isn't the greatest talented team I've ever coached, but it's the greatest team I've ever coached."

East finished its season 33-10 overall and with Saturday's victory advanced to the Northwest Regional tournament in Yakima, Wash. Its first game is Thursday at 9 a.m., ADT against Oregon's champion.

In its past two regional appearances, East is 1-4.

Wylie hopes to improve that record this year.

"They play as a team and figure things out for themselves," he said.

Nick Nading, playing in his final Legion game in Alaska, figured out Chugiak in the championship game.

He pitched six solid innings, giving up six hits and striking out four. The only run he allowed was in the top of the first when Spink scored David Morse on a single up the middle.

From then on, Nading forced eight fly balls and didn't allow a runner past second base. East tacked on four more insurance runs in the fifth inning on RBI singles from Zack Plancich and Paul Lumpkin, and a bases-loaded sacrifice fly from Nick Nading.

"I knew I had to throw strikes and keep the ball down," Nading said.

"I got them to fly out a lot and Chugiak's a ground-ball hitting team."

Despite earning the tournament's top pitcher award for posting a 2-0 record and 3.00 ERA, Nading said he's not a much of a pitcher.

Normally he plays the infield and occasionally the outfield.

"I just get thrown into the mix and do my job," he said.

And Scott, who went 2 for 3 with two RBIs and a run scored, likes it when his little brother is put to work.

"He always grabs our home runs," Scott said. "That's his job."

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2005 American Legion Baseball

State Championship

At Mulcahy Stadium

Saturday's Results

Game 2

Chugiak Post 33 100 000 000 -- 1 10 0

East Post 34 200 030 00X -- 5 ?8 0

Chugiak -- Spink and Kucko. East -- N. Nading, Beltz (7). W -- N.

Nading. L -- Rosen. 2B -- East: J. Plancich. HR -- East: Scott.