



2018 State Baseball Championships

Mora Wins A/2A State Baseball Championship

The 2018 edition of the Mora Rangers won the school's first state baseball championship. Mora (19-4) beat Mesilla Valley in a mercy-rule title game, 12-2.

Mora came into the tournament as a 2 seed and met up with the top ranked SonBlazers at Isotopes Park. After a scoreless first inning, the Rangers jumped out to an early lead after plating four in the second inning. Kenneth Martinez and Javier Branch each knocked in a run with back-to-back singles giving the Rangers their 4-0 lead. Mesilla Valley (16-4) would cut the lead in half after scoring two runs in the bottom of the second on three consecutive hits.

Mora distanced themselves from Mesilla Valley in the next frame as they put together an eight-run third inning. The Rangers sent 14 batters to the plate in the third. Gene Hern started the rally with an RBI to left to make it 5-2 and the rout was on. Pitching problems didn't help Mesilla Valley's cause. SonBlazer pitchers hit three batters, recorded five walks and threw a pair of wild pitches.

Branch, one of just two seniors on the roster, went 2-3 at the plate with 3 RBIs and two runs scored. Alonzo Aragon, the only other senior, was 2-4 with a pair of doubles and 4 RBIs. Devondre Cordova finished the game 1-2 with two runs and two RBIs.



Texico Earns Third Straight Blue Trophy in Baseball

Texico, Texico, Texico. That's what it looks like on the list of New Mexico State Baseball Champions for Class 3A in 2016, 2017 and 2018.

The Texico Wolverines (27-2) beat Estancia 5-0 in the championship game of the 3A bracket. Most of their scoring came in the first inning. The Wolverines touched up Estancia (25-3) starter Zach Abeita. Texico junior Dalton Thatcher got on base with a double. Then his teammate Cole Rohrbach knocked in Thatcher with a triple of his own. Rohrbach would later score on a throwing error by the Bears. In that same inning, senior Nathan Phipps added another run with a deep solo homer giving Texico a 3-0 lead. The Wolverines would add another run in fifth and sixth innings to close out the scoring.

Thatcher was on the mound the entire game only giving up five hits over seven innings and striking out six batters.



“Dalton pitched a heck of a game, hats off to that man,” said Phipps. “He competed the whole time and we just stayed resilient through the whole game.”

The victory was a redemption of sorts for the Wolverines who came up short as a number one seed at the state basketball tournament just months earlier.

“We didn’t come up with a state championship in basketball, but it’s a whole different game,” explained Dalton Thatcher. “You hit the ball, you field the ball, you pitch the ball and that’s how you win.”

“This group’s been building and growing for 3-4 years now,” said coach Ty Thatcher following the win. “They played a lot of baseball and learned from the other sports as well and it’s fun to see them come through and play the game the right way.”

Hope Christian Claims 4A Baseball Championship

The Hope Huskies (25-6) took home the blue trophy with a 3-0 win over Bernalillo (21-10) in the 2018 Furr’s Buffet 4A State Baseball Championship at Isotopes Park. It was Hope’s second consecutive trip to the title game after falling to Portales in the championship the previous season.

The Spartans threatened early, loading the bases in the first. But Hope pitcher Tristan Copeland got out of the jam and would then strike out the next three batters in the second.

Hope got on the board in the second inning. The Huskies loaded the bases and Noah Chavez scored the first run on a balk by Bernalillo pitcher Isaiah Chavez. Braden Rue would cross home on a wild pitch to make it 2-nothing Huskies. Hope’s only hit in the second inning was off the bat of Coy Karler. His bloop single scored Nikko Ruiz to give Hope a 3-0 lead and that is all they would need.

Reliever Aidan McNichol came in relief to get the final two outs. Hope scored their three runs on just three hits by Evan Torres, Karler and McNichol. The Huskies started the tournament as the number one seed and finished the playoffs on top. It’s their first state championship since 2013.

“It’s fantastic,” said junior Kole Simmons following the win. “After last year, the burning inside us after the loss to Portales, we put so much hard work into this season, I’ve never felt anything better than to win a championship with my brothers.”



Farmington Wins 5A State Title

It was 1 versus 2 and in the end #2 finished #1.

The Class 5A championship at Isotopes Park had defending state champ Goddard (24-5) going up against Farmington (24-5) for the blue trophy. The #1 Rockets were playing in the title game for the fifth straight year. For the Scorpions, it was their first trip back to the championship since 2008.

The game started slowly with a scoreless first inning. In the second, both teams got on the board. Goddard’s Ty Villareal singled to right, scoring Drew Price, giving the Rockets a 1-nothing lead. The Scorpions tied it up in the bottom half of the frame when sophomore Emilio Pardo scored on a wild pitch.

In the third inning, Farmington took the lead when Josh Spellbring singled up the middle, scoring Gavin Martin. Farmington wouldn't trail the rest of the day.

Goddard tied it up at 2-2 in the fifth, but in the bottom of the inning the Scorpions regained the lead with a pair of runs. Emilio Pardo knocked in Spellbring to make it 3-2 and a dropped pop up scored Joseph Mihelich to make it 4-2. Goddard couldn't avoid the miscues all day. The Rockets finished the game with four errors.

The Scorpions would add another run in the sixth to make it a 5-2 game. The Rockets made it interesting in the final frame as they would score and run and load the bases with two outs. Reliever Danny Carpenter came in to pick up the save with the final ground-out to end it 5-3.

Spellbring finished 3-3 at the plate with an RBI, Pardo also went 3-3 on the game including a double and a pair of runs.

La Cueva Wins 2018 6A Baseball Championship

Second verse, same as the first. It was a repeat performance for the La Cueva baseball team as the Bears won back-to-back state titles. Their run to the blue trophy in 2018 was almost identical to their previous season. In 2017, the Bears lost their first game of the season and then went on to win 28 straight games capped off with a state title. In 2018, La Cueva lost their first two games of the year and then went on to win 27 of their next 28 games including another championship.

La Cueva (27-3) met up with Piedra Vista (23-8) in the championship game. After a scoreless first inning, the Bears found their bats. Junior Ben Schoneman got the rally started with a shot to right center, knocking in the first run of the game and the offensive snowball started to grow. La Cueva put up six runs in the top of the second, an inning where La Cueva sent 10 batters to the plate.

La Cueva senior Chad Kerschen got the starting nod and held off the Panthers for the first two innings. In the third, Piedra Vista got on the board with a pair of runs, cutting the Bears lead to four. But that would be as close as the Panthers would get.

In the fourth inning, La Cueva put up another six runs up on the board. Designated hitter Phoenix Autrey knocked in a pair of runs on his own during the rally.

La Cueva didn't need the full seven innings to end this one. The Bears tacked on two more runs in the fifth to take a 14-2 lead. Piedra Vista added one of their own, but couldn't cross home plate anymore as the game ended 14-3 in five innings.

Hunter Straub had 3 hits and 3 RBIs on the game, senior Ryan Ramos was 2-2 with 2 RBIs, senior Jack Pineda had two hits (including a double) and a pair of RBIs and junior Ben Schoneman drove in two runs.

It was La Cueva's 10th state title since 2003.

