

By Dennis Dunn  
Special Correspondent

Then there was one.

After losing to Daleville in the 2016 Class A State title game, the Lanesville baseball team was poised to get there for the second straight year, but with sights on winning it.

All of that hoping and waiting became reality on Saturday afternoon, June 17 as they defeated Rossville 5-1 in this year's Class A State championship game at Victory Field in Indianapolis.

"It's incredible," Eagles Coach Zach Payne said. "It's hard to put into words. It's an incredible feeling to be able to know you're the last team to win a game, a state championship. I'm just so impressed by the way our kids improved in the offseason to be able to give themselves a chance to (get to state) again."

Lanesville senior Cameron Harvey began on the mound for the Eagles and went the distance as he finished the year 9-2. He gave up three hits, one run, two walks and four strikeouts. He also went 1-for-3 from the plate with an RBI.

"Having surgery made me mentally stronger," Harvey said. "Before I wasn't as mentally strong, but everyone on the team was pretty strong throughout the year and our bats were alive. There are 10 seniors. We turned into brothers."

However, Harvey didn't begin his career at Lanesville as he transferred from Providence. He didn't play his junior year because of Tommy John surgery, but came back his senior year with a vengeance. He will continue his baseball career at Indiana Wesleyan.

For the first four innings, neither team could produce anything. Ryan McCubbins got the Eagles first hit in the first inning with a two-out double. The Hornets countered with two hits of their own in the bottom of the first. The Eagles collected their second hit in the third inning when Zach Fink singled.

In the top of the fifth inning and two outs, the Eagles made some noise. Evan Peele had a two-run single for the 2-0 lead as Greg Daly and Isaac Casabella scored. Mitchell Bailey then doubled to left field that scored McCubbins and Ethan Purdy. Harvey helped his own cause with an RBI single that scored Bailey for the 5-0 lead. Noah Jones then popped up for the third out.

"Momentum is everything to us," Peele said. "We feed off that, our fans feed off that, we feed off our fans. We had two outs and we scored five runs. That was big to be able to make that hit – score two and keep the guys behind me in the game."

The Hornets tallied with a run in the bottom of the fifth inning as they had bases loaded as a runner scampered in from third on a wild pitch.

"I knew the top four or five guys were probably pretty good," Harvey said. "So I just went and attacked them. I thought I was going to have to throw more off-speed this game, but it ended up they hit my off-speed more than my fast ball. So my fast ball, I probably threw it about 95 percent of the game."

The Eagles finished at 20-6, while the Hornets finished the year 24-9.

The Eagles graduated 10 seniors this season and they will go down in the record books as the most successful team in school history. They will leave their legacy by capturing 63 wins and winning two sectional, regional and semi state titles and one state title.

“This is an answered prayer for most of us,” Peele said. “This is something we’ve dreamed about since kids playing tee ball together. ... I wouldn’t have wanted to do it with any other guys. It’s something I’ll never forget.”

Now that this season is over the Eagles can reflect on their run in Class A because when they open next season up as the defending state champs they will be in Class 2A due to the IHSAA success factor.

“It’s a really special feeling to set the bar for the young kids that look up to us,” Peele said. “There are a lot of little kids that come up to, not just me, but everybody on the team. Everybody has a favorite player on the team, and they look up to us. We owe them our best.”

Saturday, June 17, at

Indianapolis Victory Field

Class A Championship

LHS 000 050 0 – 5 6 1

RHS 000 010 0 – 1 3 1

WP: Cameron Harvey (9-2). LP: Trevor Waggoner (11-2).

LHS hits: Greg Daly, Evan Peele, Ryan McCubbins, Mitchell Bailey, Harvey, Zach Fink; 2B:

McCubbins, Bailey; RBIs: 2-Peele, Bailey; 1-Harvey; Runs: 1-Daly, Ethan Purdy, McCubbins, Bailey, Isaac Casabella.