

By EARLWATT

• Daily Leader

Down by a run in the bottom of the last

inning, Cimarron River needed to score one run

to force the game to extra innings and keep

their dreams of a state championship alive. But

Timothy Fitzgerald didn't come to the plate

looking for the tie. He wanted the win.

Fitzgerald sent his second home run of the

game out of the park with a runner on base for

a walk-off home run and a state championship

in a 6-5 win over Emporia.

The Rattlers had a chance to keep the game

close thanks to a heroic catch in the outfield by

Cade Hinkle who stole a home run from

Emporia when he reached up and grabbed a

deep ball to the fence and then went through

the fence.

Emporia protested, wanting the play to be

counted as a home run. But the officials denied

the request because Hinkle made the catch in

the field of play.

Fitzgerald hits walk-off home run for state championship

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The win earned the Rattler 12-year-olds a

state championship and a ticket to the Midwest

Regional next week at Lamar, Colo. Emporia

will also attend the event since South Dakota

does not compete at the 70-foot base length for

12-year-olds.

Fitzgerald was named the game's MVP for his

two home runs and Hinkle won the WOW

Award for his home-run saving catch in the

outfield.