

THE DROUGHT

IT'S BEEN 36 YEARS SINCE HOOVER SOFTBALL HAS BEEN TO STATE AND LAST YEAR WAS THEIR YEAR.

Words and design: Jordan Redeker, Design Editor in Chief **Photos:** Barron Photos

It is the bottom of the 7th inning. ADM Tigers are behind by five. There are two outs. ADM player freshman Aniston Smith is up to bat with a count of one ball and two strikes. Graduate Hannah Blackford threw a change up for her last strike of her high school softball career. Smith takes that pitch and grounds out to junior Daija Bates at third base for Hoover to win the state tournament.

“It felt really good because after I made the play I knew that we just won state,” Bates said.

Senior Abby Nolte knew the team would be under estimated this year so her and the rest of the team used that to their advantage.

They played all 5A schools until they made it up to first round so the 4A schools didn't know much about any of the players.



ONE GAME AT A TIME

When the season was coming to state, coach Missie Feuerbach knew she was going to have a very small team, and no room for injuries and not enough players for a junior varsity team. The

team had a total of 14 players, but one was injured and two hadn't played before.

“Having no JV was a disadvantage because if you weren't the starting nine, you didn't get a ton of playing time on the field to continue to get better in game situations,” Feuerbach said.

With Blackford leaving, Nolte must step up and be the starting pitcher for the Huskies next season. Nolte has been the backup pitcher since she moved to Hoover her sophomore year. She has been a big bat for the Huskies all throughout the season; she hit five home



IS OVER



runs during the season against Des Moines East which gave her a big reputation across the city. Next season, she knows she must work to be the big bat and the starting pitcher for the Huskies.

“I need to continue my hitting and improve my pitching for my team,” Nolte said.

Ending the season with a win does not happen for most teams. Now that Hoover has experienced it, they must do whatever they can to maintain their strength and come back with a win again next season.

“Same mentality and expectations. We cannot get too cocky or too confident. We are now going to have a target on our back and all of our success from last year can be easily taken if we don’t go about the upcoming season with some grace and focus,” Feuerbach said.

STATE CHAMPS

