

Corby grand slam secures Tigers' win over Lancers in IHSA Regional Championship

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EDWARDSVILLE – This **Saturday's** match up between **Edwardsville High School** and the **Belleville East Lancers** proves that the **Tigers**, under the direction of **Lori Blade**, can truly overcome any obstacle.

Until the bottom of the sixth inning, the Tigers were dragging behind the Lancers with a score of 3-1 in the **IHSA Class 4A Regional Championship** game. With no time to waste, it was time for the ladies in black and orange to get their head into the game.

With a fantastic comeback set into motion by a solo home run by **Sarah Hangsleben**, some walks off the pitches of Belleville East's **Kristina Bettis**, **Anna Burke** bringing in a run from a bases-loaded situation and a phenomenal grand slam off the bat of **Jordan Corby**, the Edwardsville Tigers secured their place as the regional champions with a final score of 7-3.

"I was just looking for a pitch where I could at least score one run," Corby said about that game-changing hit, "I really thought I popped it up to left field, but everyone started yelling so I just kept running."

Hangsleben's home run at the beginning of their half of the inning was key to building the momentum back toward the Tigers' side.

"That was huge," she said. "I felt like we were really slow starting, so I felt like that really set the tone for the inning. It pushed us to keep going."

As previously mentioned, the Tigers did not start out as strong as they are typically used to. In fact, the Lancers were the epitome of confidence during the first half. Hitting pitches off **Jordan Garella** left and right, bringing in runs by **Jessica Belzer** and **Brooke Laidley**, Belleville East had no problems keeping their offense tight and their defense even tighter.

Blade, after reflecting upon the game with her girls, even noted that the Lancers had an answer to nearly every play they were making. At the end of the first, the Lancers led the Tigers 2-0.



In the top of the second, the momentum still stuck with the Lancers, allowing **Courtney Butler** to cross home plate off a single by Belzer.

The Lancers led 3-0 until the bottom of the fourth inning. Hangsleben singled to left field, advanced to second on a sacrifice out by **Allison Loehr** and was propelled around third and across home plate by a single from **Emma Lewis**, making the score 3-1.

After an uneventful fifth inning and top of the sixth, the rest was history as Hangsleben hit the solo home run, setting the chain reaction in motion.

Garella brought home the team's win for the day on the mound, only allowing five hits and three runs. She only committed one error.

Corby (2), **Hayli Green**, **Rachel Anderson**, Hangsleben (2), Burke, Lewis and **Tayrn Brown** each earned hits for the day.

Bettis, who took the loss for the day, allowed five runs off six hits, committed five errors and walked batters. She produced the one and only strike out for the day. **Tori Lonsdale** stepped onto the mound for Bettis, allowing three hits and two runs, committed two errors and gave away one home run.

Belzer (2), Laidley, Butler and **Angela Vanderpluym** produced the five hits for the Lancers.

The Tigers will go on to face the **O'Fallon High School Panthers** in the **Normal Sectional**, which will be played at **4:30 p.m.** on **Tuesday, May 31**, in Collinsville.