

Tigers Win 34th Baseball Regional Championship In Program History, Setup Rematch With Lancers In Sectional Semifinals

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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ALTON – The Edwardsville High School baseball team (31-4) took on and defeated the Quincy Blue Devils Saturday morning in the regional championship game. The Tigers won the game 13-3 after six innings.

“Boy, you have to cherish every one,” Edwardsville head coach Tim Funkhouser said regarding winning another regional plaque. “Sometimes at Edwardsville your expected to win it and I mean, every game, every pitch matters, and I’m glad we were able to prevail.”

The Blue Devils got on the board first to grab a quick 1-0 lead, but the Tigers’ offense exploded early on.

Lucas Huebner hit a leadoff homerun to tie the game back up. Spencer Stearns doubled then Riley Iffrig homered again for Edwardsville to make it 3-1 Tigers. Iffrig had a four-hit day with a couple of doubles and three RBI’s.

“Our guys put some good swings on it right off the bat,” Funkhouser said. “It goes to the preparation and the trust,” he added.

Quincy struck right back though after a two-RBI double to tie things back up.

After getting walked, moved to second after a lineout, and stealing third, Kayden Jennings scored after Quincy’s pitcher balked to make it 4-3 in the bottom of the second. It was a sort of controversial call at the time with the Blue Devils’ coach upset about the umpire’s decision.

Edwardsville didn’t turn back though as they piled on the runs. They scored three in the fourth to make it 7-3 and walked off the game after scoring six more runs in the bottom of the sixth.

Gannon Burns started on the mound for the Tigers and threw the first four innings. He allowed only four hits and picked up five strikeouts. Alec Marchetto came in and pitched relief for the final two innings only allowing a single hit with the two combining for eight K’s. Edwardsville outhit Quincy 12-5.

At the time, Funkhouser didn’t know who his opponent was going to be because the other regional championship game, the ‘Battle for Belleville’, didn’t start until 1 p.m. that day.

He and the team eventually found out, and it should be a good one.

Edwardsville started the season on a 22-game winning streak. That streak ended when they took on Belleville East back on May 3. The Lancers came into that game undefeated as well and won 2-0 at home.

The two will meet again in the sectional semifinals on Wednesday, June 1, at SIUE’s Roy E. Lee Field with the first pitch scheduled for 5 p.m. The Tigers will be looking to

grab their second state championship in three years and get a little payback over Belleville East.