



Griffin Socks Pair Of Homers, Drives In Five, Owens Fans Six As Tigers Defeat Blackhawks 11-5, Joins Baseball Team In Advancing To State 4A Final

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June 8 2022 6:02 AM



BLOOMINGTON - Lexie Griffin hit a pair of two runs homers as part of a three-hit, five RBI day, while Ryleigh Owens tossed another complete game in the circle, striking out six as Edwardsville defeated West Aurora 11-5 in the IHSA softball Class 4A super-

sectional game at Illinois Wesleyan University's Carol Willis Field/Inspiration Park Tuesday afternoon in Bloomington.



In a game that was postponed from Monday afternoon due to weather concerns, the Tigers joined the baseball team in advancing to this weekend's start finals, guaranteeing that both teams will be bringing home a trophy for the first time in both program's history. It's also the first appearance for the Tigers in the last four since 2009.

Edwardsville jumped out in front in the opening inning as Owens led off with a double, went to third on a sacrifice bunt by Avery Hamilton and scored on Jillian Lane's single to left to go ahead 1-0. Land later stole second and one out later, scored on a Sydney Lawrence RBI single to left to double the lead to 2-0.

The Blackhawks halved the lead in their half of the second as Sara Archer drew a leadoff walk, went to second on ground out and scored on an error that allowed Katelyn Serafin to reach, making the score 2-1. The Tigers got the run back and more in the bottom of the third when Lane singled and Griffin hit the first of her two homers, a tape-measure shot to left that gave the Tigers a 4-1 lead. Lawrence then singled, went to second on a bunt and scored when Brooke Tolle reached on an error to make the score 5-1, Tolle going to second. Tolle then went to third on defensive indifference and scored when Owens reached on a dropped fly ball to left, giving Edwardsville a 7-1 lead after three.

Lane led off the fourth by reaching on an error, then Griffin hit her second homer of the day, a ball that cleared the center-field fence to give the Tigers a 9-1 lead. In the top of the fifth, West Aurora rallied when, with one out, Kiera Hayton walked, Callie Meinel singled and Alyssa Perkins hit a three-run homer to left to cut the Tigers' lead to 9-4. Owens got out of the inning without further damage to keep the score 9-4.

The Tigers got two of the runs back in their half of the fifth, starting with a leadoff single by Zoie Boyd and an Owens walk, with both runners advancing on a Hamilton sacrifice. A Lane sacrifice fly to right scored Boyd and a Griffin single scored courtesy runner Maddie Kolakowski to make it 11-4. An RBI single by Dyan Rivera in the top of the seventh cut the lead to 11-5, but West Aurora would get no closer as Owens got the final outs to give the Tigers the win and the berth at state.

To go along with Griffins' three-hit, five-RBI day, Lane had two hits and two RBIs, Lawrence came up with two hits and drove in a run, Tatum Van Ryswyk also had a pair of hits and Owens, Boyd and Jillian Hawkes all had a hit each.



Owens again went the distance inside the circle, allowing five runs on eight hits, four earned, while walking three and striking out six to gain her fifth straight postseason win.

The Tigers are now 32-3 and will play in the second semifinal Friday evening at the Louisville Slugger Sports Complex in Peoria, facing St. Charles North, who defeated Chicago Whitney Young in the Rosemont Stadium super-sectional Rosemont 6-3, with the first pitch coming at 5:30 p.m. The third and fourth place game is set for 1 p.m. Saturday and the final is scheduled for 3:30 p.m. Saturday afternoon.

In the other two super-sectional games, Barrington won their own super, defeating Gurnee Warren 6-0, while Chicago Marist Catholic also won its own super-sectional, eliminating Frankfort Lincoln-Way East 8-4.