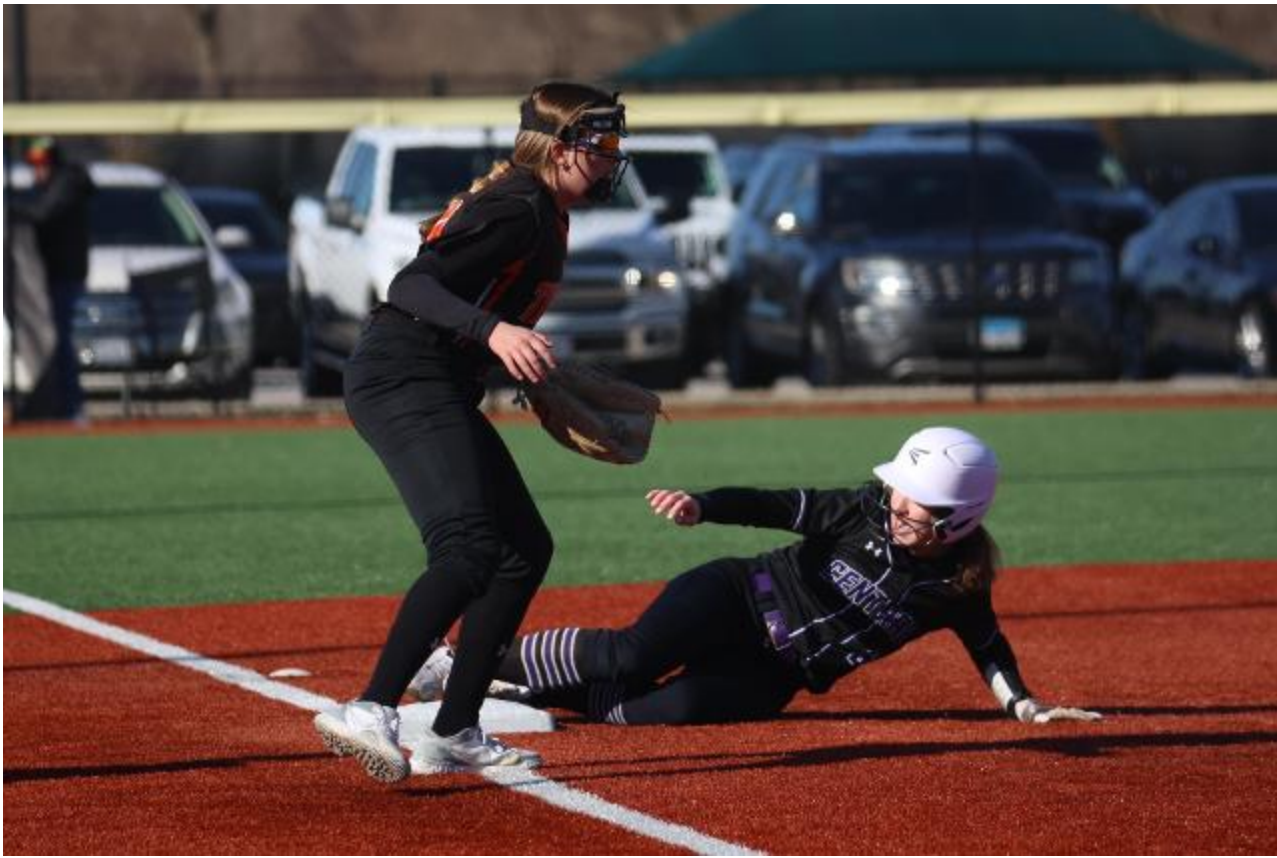


Nelson Has Good Outing As Starting Pitcher, Lane Has Two Hits As Young Tigers Softball Team Rallies To Win Over Breese Central

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
March 18 2023 7:26 AM





EDWARDSVILLE - Junior Jillian Lane had two hits while sophomore Riley Nelson had a very good outing in the circle as the starting pitcher as a young Edwardsville softball team went to 2-0 in the new season with a come-from-behind 8-5 win over Breese Central in the Tigers' home opener, moved from the Edwardsville Sports Complex to Plummer Park, due to the recent rains and wet weather.

It was the second win in as many starts for new head coach Caty Happe, who took over for the retired Lori Blade, and it's been a good start for Edwardsville thus far, having won their opener over Freeburg 1-0 on the road.

"Riley Nelson got the start and got the win with nine strikeouts," Happe said. "We gave up three runs, but we found a way to get it done after getting down early."

Conditions weren't the best, on a cold and blustery day, but the Tigers got big plays at key times to gain the win.

"We got some key hits, put the ball in play at key times," Happe said, "and made them make plays in tough conditions."

Edwardsville is a young team this year, with many freshmen and sophomores dotting the roster, and Happe feels every game is a chance to improve each day and gain valuable experience.

"We're very inexperienced at the varsity level," Happe said, "so every game is a great opportunity to get better."

The season-opening win at Freeburg, in a game where the Tigers had a rare collapse in losing to the Midgets 10-6 on opening day of 2022, did much to help the team's confidence, as Grace Blakemore drove in the only run of the game in the fourth inning and pitcher Avery Hamilton shut down the Freeburg attack.

"For sure, and we're not the same team we were last year," Happe said, "so that was a great way to get started."

The Tigers scattered their hits all around, with the Cougar defense committing a pair of errors that gave Edwardsville big runs. To go along with Lane's two hits on the day, Senior Zoie Boyd, freshman Grace Oertle and junior Avery Shaw also came up with key hits on the day to help the Tigers manufacture runs as Edwardsville scored four times in the fourth inning to help clinch the win.

Central opens its season at 0-1, while the Tigers go to 2-0 and play at Gillespie on Monday afternoon, then don't play again until Mar. 27 at Mascoutah, then return home to play Granite City Mar. 28 and then open the Southwestern Conference season at home against Collinsville Mar. 30, then meet up with Civic Memorial, also at home, on Mar. 31. All games are set to begin at 4:30 p.m.