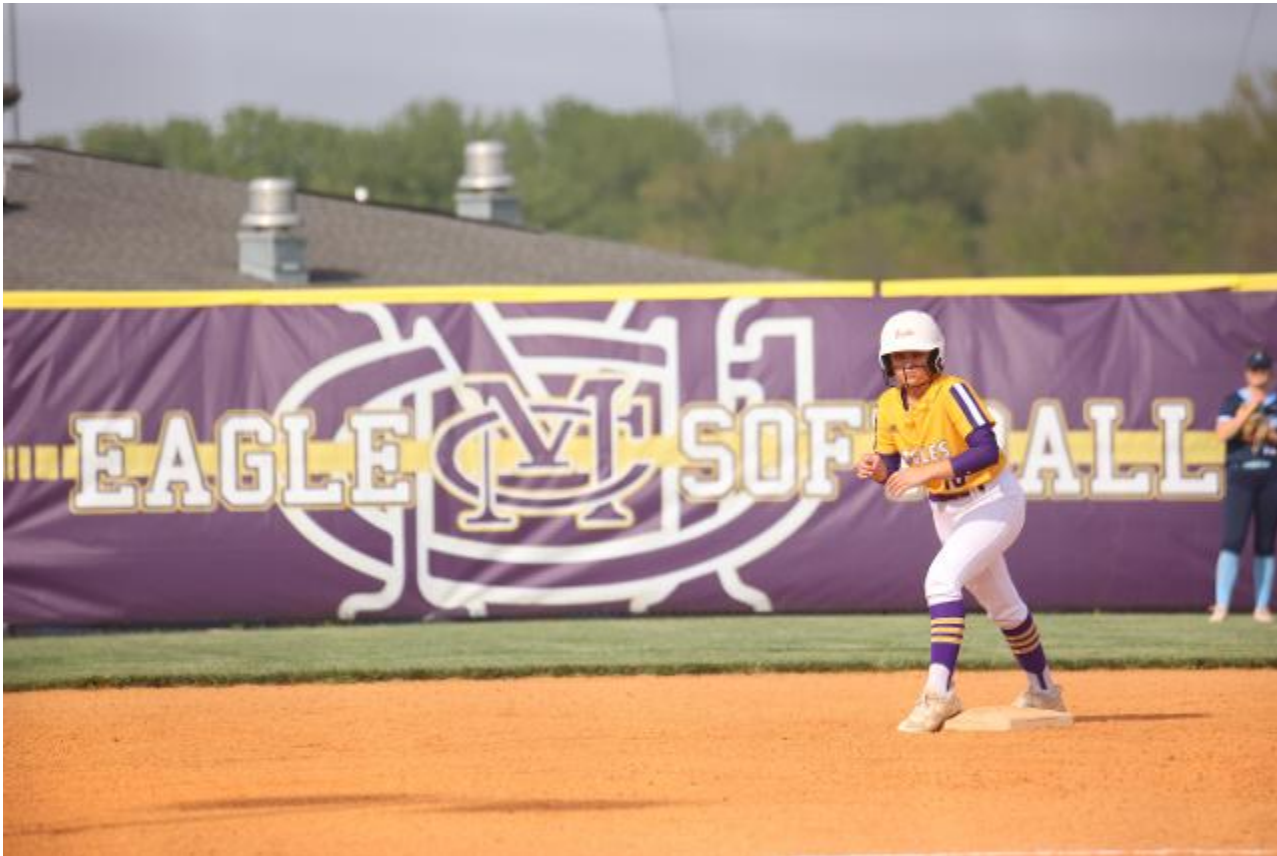


Chester's Walk-Off Double Sends CM Past MVC Rivals Jersey

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
April 27 2023 9:05 AM



BETHALTO - The Civic Memorial High School softball team was able to earn the season sweep over Mississippi Valley Conference rivals Jersey Wednesday afternoon.

The Eagles won 4-3 in dramatic, walk-off fashion to improve to 10-6 on the season and 3-3 in the MVC. The Panthers slip to 11-6 and 2-3 in conference.

The Highland Bulldogs sit atop the MVC standings at 6-0.

The Eagles wasted no time grabbing the lead. In the first inning, Isabella Thien got to second after hitting an outfield blooper. Danika Chester would bat her in after she doubled thanks to a dropped ball in the outfield.

CM had runners on the corners with two outs, but Jersey starting pitcher Ashlyn Brown did good damage control to get out of the inning only trailing 1-0.

Megan Griffith started in the circle for CM and made it through the first two innings unscathed.

The Panthers struck back in the top of the third. Things got started when Kendall Davis got to second after a dropped strike three. She was moved over to third after an Autumn Heitzman sacrifice bunt and was eventually brought in after Bria Tuttle's RBI single to tie the game up at one apiece.

After stealing second and another sac bunt, Tuttle ended up at third with two outs. Kari Krueger then reached on an error, allowing Tuttle to score and take the 2-1 lead.

In what became a back-and-forth game, CM did more damage in the fifth.

Lauren Hardy got things started with a leadoff single, followed by another single from Griffith. They both stole the base ahead of them and ended up at second and third with no outs. Ella Landers stepped up and hit a long sac fly ball to score Hardy and tie the game up once again.

A scoreless sixth inning would setup a dramatic seventh.

Davis hit a two-out single for the Panthers. Heitzman then hit an RBI single to take the lead back at 3-2.

Things weren't looking good for CM when the Eagles were down to their last out. Kaydence Harlan hit a single and Thien was walked, putting the tying runner in scoring position.

Up to the box stepped Chester, who already had an RBI. She quickly got ahead in a 3-0 count and looked as if she was going to be walked, bringing Avari Combes to the plate, but Brown battled back in the circle to work a full count.

Now down to her last strike, Chester blasted a ball to right-center field and off the wall for a two-RBI double and the 4-3 walk-off win.

"She battles," CM head coach Luke Angelo said about Chester.

"She's done a great job for us. She's kind of our utility player. We can put her on the corners, she pitches, she can catch, she's played outfield before. Danny understands her role and does a great job at it. She battles, and I'm very proud of the outcome."

The Eagles will be back in action at home on Saturday when they play a double-header against Belleville West. As for the Panthers, they host a very good Gillespie team this afternoon.