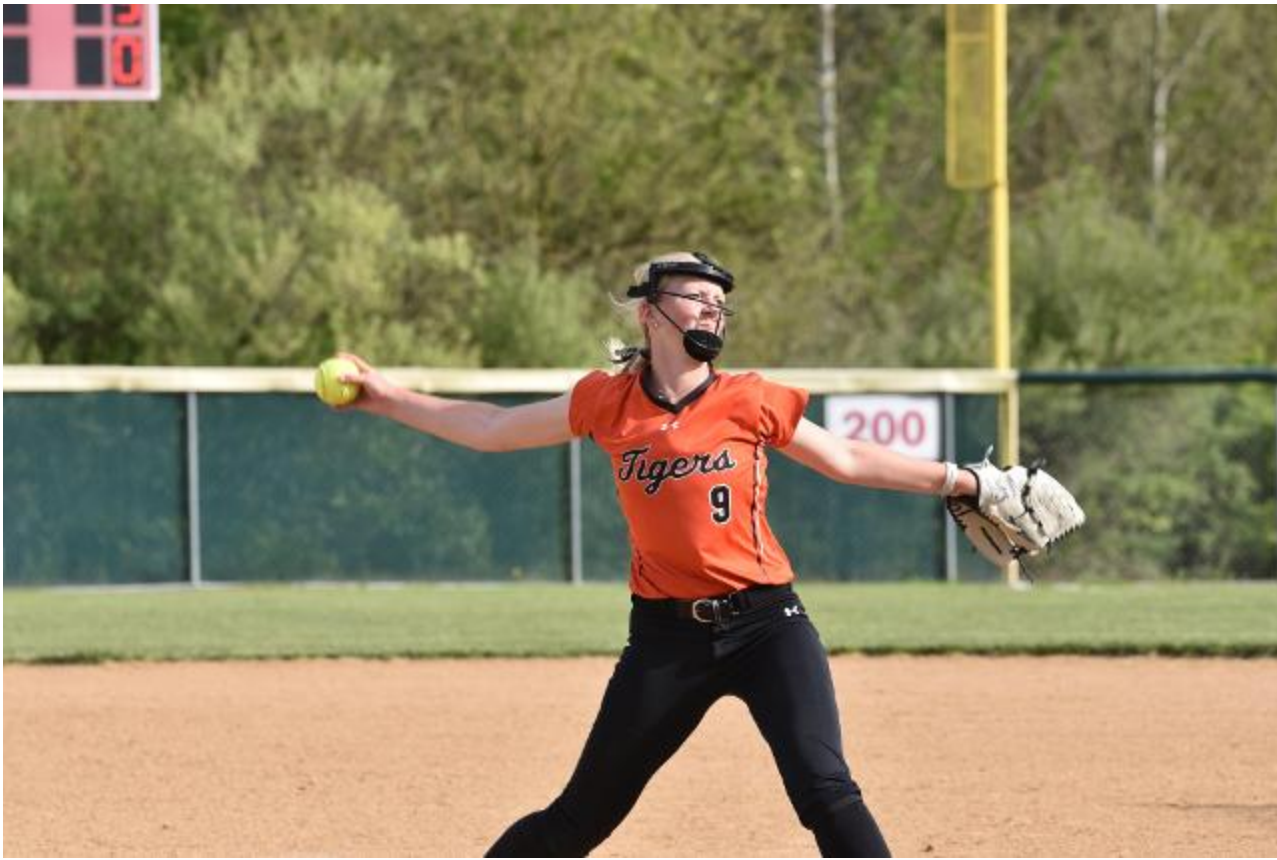




Hamilton Smashes Homer, Drives In Three, Fans 11 In 5-0 Win, Laslie, Plummer and Sauls Have Redbird Hits, Edwardsville Also Beats Maroons

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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ALTON - Edwardsville senior Avery Hamilton had a big day overall, hitting a home run and driving in three runs at the plate and was equally impressive in the circle, scattering three hits and striking out 11 as the Tigers defeated Alton 5-0 in a Southwestern Conference softball game played Thursday afternoon at Redbirds Park.

The Tigers scored all of their runs in the second inning in going to 9-0 in the SWC with three conference games remaining, a game ahead of Belleville East, who's currently 8-1 in the conference.

Hamilton had two hits, including her homer, and drove in three runs for Edwardsville, while Riley Nelson and Avery Shaw had a hit and RBI each and both Jillian Hawkes and Reese McNamara had the other hits.

Alaina Laslie, Morgan Plummer and Alissa Sauls had the only three Redbirds hits, while Grace Presley went all the way in the circle, allowing five runs, three of them earned, on six hits, walking two and fanning 10.

Hamilton scattered the three hits while in the circle, walking no one and striking out 11.

The Redbirds are now 10-12 and play at Civic Memorial Saturday morning in a 10 a.m. start, then are at Belleville West on Tuesday and host Granite City next Thursday to

start a three-game home stand, which includes games against CM on May 15 and East St. Louis on May 16, all games starting at 4:30 p.m.



Tigers Get Off To Hot Start, Score Seven Unanswered Runs, Nelson, Fox Pitch Well In 10-2 Softball Win Over Belleville West





EDWARDSVILLE - Both Riley Nelson and Marley Fox pitched very well inside the circle, while Edwardsville's softball team got off to a hot start, scoring seven unanswered runs in the first two innings en route to a Tigers' 10-2 win over Belleville West in a Southwestern Conference game played Tuesday afternoon at the Edwardsville Sports Complex.

The win was the Tigers' sixth in their last seven and 15th in their last 18 games, the team playing very well during that string. On Tuesday, Edwardsville got off to a fast start and never looked back.

"We got off to a hot start, scored three in the first, four in the second," said Tigers' head coach Caty Happe, "and we hit well up and down the lineup."

Both Nelson and Fox also pitched very well holding Maroon batters at bay, especially in key situations.

"Riley pitched the first four innings and Marley the last three," Happe said, "and they both did a great job with runners in scoring position. They both pitched pretty well. That's always good to see."

And the hitting is coming around exceptionally well also, as the Tigers pounded out 13 hits and had a total of nine RBIs. The hitting couldn't be any better as the stretch run of the season is starting to commence. That the Tigers also played well in a weekend road trip to Pleasant Hill and Pontiac, taking two of three against three of the better teams in north central Illinois, will help in the long haul.

"We played really good competition up there," Happe said, "and hopefully, it'll make us better in the long run."

Against the Maroons, the Tigers jumped out to their 7-0 lead after two innings before West scored in the top of the third with a single run. The Tigers countered with two runs in the third and one in the fourth to go up 10-1 before the Maroons scored a single run in the top of the seventh as Edwardsville took the 10-2 decision.

Grace Oertle led the Tigers' attack with three hits, including a home run, and three RBIs, while Fox had two hits and two RBIs, both Zoie Boyd and Jillian Lane had two hits each, Nelson helped herself with a hit and two RBIs, both Jillian Hawkes and Reese McNamara had a hit and RBI each and Grace Blakemore had a hit.

Nelson got the win in the circle, going four innings and giving up a run on four hits while walking one and striking out seven. Fox picked up the save by pitching the final three innings, allowing a run on three hits, walking one and fanning six.

The Tigers improve to 22-4 and host Teutopolis on Friday, East St. Louis on Tuesday and Piasa Southwestern on Wednesday before meeting Belleville East in a game that could very well determine the outcome of the league race next Thursday, with all games starting at 4:30 p.m.



[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)