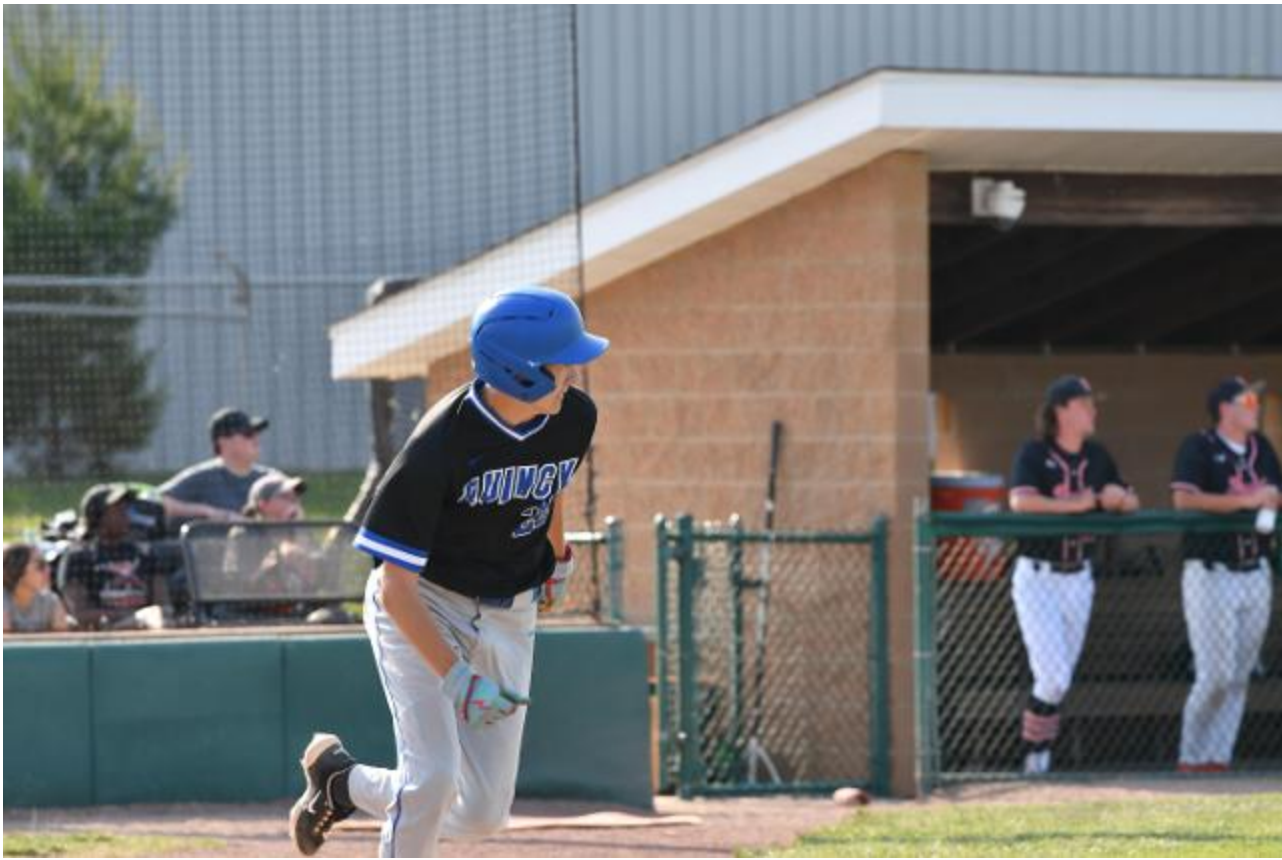




Edwardsville Rallies From 3-0 Deficit, Defeats Quincy 6-4 In Class 4A Baseball Regional Semifinal

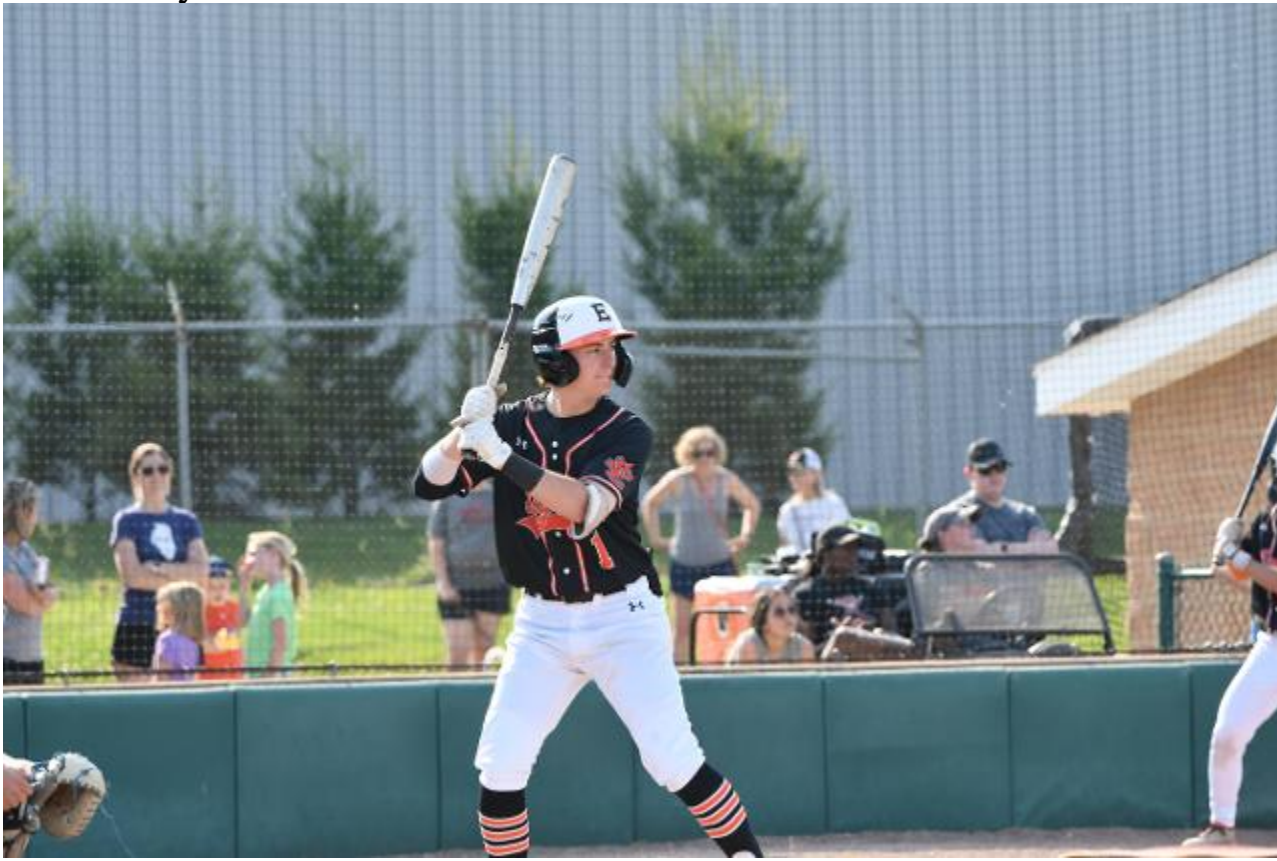
by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Cole Funkhouser had two hits and two key RBIs in the fifth inning and Andrew Hendrickson came on in the seventh inning to save the game for Logan Geggus, who threw six innings and struck out five as Edwardsville rallied from a 3-0

deficit to eliminate Quincy 6-4 in the first semifinal of the IHSA Class 4A regional Wednesday afternoon at Tom Pile Field.



The Tigers came from behind to score twice in the third, fourth and fifth innings and held off a Blue Devil seventh-inning rally to hold on and win. It wasn't the prettiest of wins, but as the postseason is now underway, it's a matter of survival and advance.

"Yeah, survive and advance is right," said Edwardsville coach Tim Funkhouser. "We didn't execute as well, (Kayden Jennings) made some great plays defensively at shortstop for us, and then, Logan Geggus was able to bounce back after a struggle in the first inning and we had some big hits when we needed to. Ideally, we wouldn't have stranded as many guys on base, but Quincy made it tough on us at the plate and we'll just have to clean that up, as well as some execution on some different plays."

For the defending Class 4A state champion Tigers, being able to come back from the early 3-0 deficit was a big thing as well.

"Yeah, we showed the ability to continue to compete," Funkhouser said. "Ideally, I think the nerves got in us a little bit and we didn't make either some pitches or make some plays defensively. But as the game went on, you could tell that broke off and we had a

few guys keep getting on base and making pressure on them. and we were able to break through with some runs. Probably all those innings, we wish we would have been able to push more across, but we did what we could."

The playoff opener isn't usually a game that looks good aesthetically, but again, the key is to survive and advance.

"Yeah, that's the golden phrase right now, survive and advance," Funkhouser said with a smile. "And Andrew Hendrickson really stepped up big, getting those last two outs. We needed that from him."

Things didn't get off on the right foot for Edwardsville, as Blue Devil leadoff batter Evan Sohm reached on an error by the third baseman and Joe Schroeder was hit by a pitch to put runners on first and second. Two fly ball outs kept the runners there, but Blake Bunch doubled home Sohm and Schroeder to give Quincy a 2-0 lead. In the Tiger second, Caeleb Copeland led off with a walk and went to second on a passed ball, then was singled over to third by Lucas Huebner, who stole second. A Jennings strikeout and a foul out by Lucas Krebs ended the threat, preserving the 2-0 Blue Devil lead.

In the Quincy third, after the first two batters were retired, Tykell Hammas reached first on a dropped third strike for a passed ball, after which Hammas stole second and scored on an RBI single by Bunch to make it 3-0. The Tigers cut the lead to 3-2 in the bottom of the third, Greyson Rathgeb reached on an error by the third baseman and stole second, after which Funkhouser was hit by a pitch to create a first-and-second situation. Joe Chiarodo singled home Rathgeb to make it 3-1 and after a fly out and Copeland walk to load the bases, Hendrickson's sacrifice fly to left scored Funkhouser to cut the Quincy lead to 3-2 after three.



In the home half of the fourth, with one out, Rathgeb singled and went to second on an error by the left fielder, then scored on a Funkhouser RBI single to tie the game at 3-3. Chiarodo reached on an error, with Funkhouser going to third and Chiarodo stealing second, with a ground out by Riley Iffrig to second scoring Funkhouser to give Edwardsville the lead at 4-3. In the fifth, Huebner reached on an error on a grounder to third, with the throw pulling the first baseman off the bag. Jennings sacrificed Huebner to second, Lucas Krebs was hit by a pitch and both were sacrificed to second and third by Rathgeb, with both coming in on a key two-run single by Funkhouser to make it 6-3.

Geggus was able to recover nicely, settled in and retired seven of the next eight batters, setting the side down in order in the fifth and allowing only a pair of hits, as the Tiger defense backed him up with solid play in the field. Alec Marchetto came on in the seventh and ran into trouble immediately, hitting Kyle Taylor with a pitch, giving up a single to Sohm and walking Schroeder to load the bases. A Brady Lowe sacrifice fly scored Taylor to make it 6-4, Hammas was hit by a pitch to reload the bases, Hendrickson came on and retired the final two batters to save the 6-4 win for Geggus.

The Blue Devils finish their season 16-17, while the Tigers improve to 27-9 and will play Collinsville, a 2-1 winner over Alton in the second semifinal, in the final Saturday

morning at 10 a.m. The Kahoks-Tigers winner advances to the Illinois Wesleyan sectional next week, playing against the Belleville East regional winner, O'Fallon, Belleville East, or Belleville West, next Wednesday, May 31, at a site to be announced.



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