

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY WINS THE GREAT LAKES REGIONAL



WITH A CLEAN SWEEP OF THE COMPETITION, OHIO STATE TOOK THE GREAT LAKES REGIONAL TOURNAMENT TROPHY HOME TO COLUMBUS, OHIO AND EARNED THEMSELVES A BID TO COLUMBUS, GEORGIA AND THE NCSA WORLD SERIES TOURNAMENT.

THE 3RD SEEDED BUCKEYES DEFEATED 2-SEED AND #2 NATIONALLY RANKED GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY IN THEIR FIRST GAME OF THE TOURNAMENT 3-0 ON SATURDAY MORNING.

WHILE THESE TEAMS WERE COMPETING, ANOTHER GREAT GAME WAS TAKING PLACE ON FIELD 1. THE TOP SEED AND NATIONAL #1 UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS WAS FALLING TO A QUICK 10-2 HOLE TO THE AT-LARGE BID, 4TH SEED, AND NATIONAL #13 MIAMI UNIVERSITY OF OHIO. THIS DEFICIT WASN'T INTIMIDATING TO THE FIGHTING ILLINI AS THEY BATTLED BACK TO 10-9, BUT IN THE END, THEY COULDN'T QUITE RECOVER AND MIAMI TOOK THE WIN.



THESE MORNING RESULTS MADE FOR A SET OF INTERESTING GAMES IN THE AFTERNOON. IN THE ELIMINATION GAME WERE THE TOP SEEDS IN THE TOURNAMENT AS WELL AS IN THE NATION, ILLINOIS AGAINST GRAND VALLEY STATE. ON THE OTHER FIELD WAS A GREAT LAKES – EAST BATTLE OF OHIO STATE VERSUS MIAMI, TWO TEAMS WHO SEE EACH OTHER THREE TIMES EVERY YEAR. ILLINOIS PITCHING WAS ABLE TO KEEP THE TALENTED GVSU BATS AS COLD AS THE NEAR-FREEZING TEMPERATURES IN INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA AS THEY HANDLED THE LAKERS 6-1.



ON FIELD 2, MIAMI LOOKED CONFIDENT AGAINST AN OHIO STATE TEAM THAT THEY HAD BEATEN IN TWO OF THEIR THREE MEETINGS DURING THE REGULAR SEASON. HAVING SUCH FAMILIARITY WITH ONE ANOTHER LED TO A TIGHT GAME AND ULTIMATELY A 1-1 TIE HEADING INTO THE BOTTOM OF THE 7TH INNING. THIS IS WHERE THE HOME TEAM OHIO STATE ENDED THE GAME WITH A WALK-OFF SACRIFICE FLY TO EARN THE WIN 2-1. NOT ONLY WAS THIS VICTORY ELATING FOR A TEAM MOTIVATED TO

TAKE BACK CONTROL OF THE HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES, BUT IT ALSO GAVE OSU A BYE AND SEAT IN THE CHAMPIONSHIP

SUNDAY MORNING FEATURED A MATCHUP OF THE TWO 1-1 TEAMS IN THE TOURNAMENT, ILLINOIS AND MIAMI, WITH THE WINNER EARNING A BID TO THE NCSA WORLD SERIES AS WELL AS THE FINAL SEAT IN THE REGIONAL TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP. MIAMI'S PITCHING ROTATION WAS DEPLETED AND SO BRINGING IN A FIRST-TIMER TO THE RUBBER AGAINST THE TOP TEAM IN THE NATION SEEMED LIKE A DANGEROUS IDEA, BUT ONE OF NECESSITY. THE ILLINOIS BATS WERE CONFUSED BY THE OFF-SPEED PITCHES THE FIRST TIME THROUGH THE ORDER BUT WERE READY FOR THEIR SECOND "UPS." THEIR STEADILY CONSISTENT PITCHING ALSO CONTRIBUTED TO A COMFORTABLE 11-1 WIN.





FRESH OFF OF A CONFIDENCE-BUILDING WIN, ILLINOIS FACED OFF WITH OHIO STATE, KNOWING THAT THEY WOULD NEED TO BEAT THE BUCKEYES TWICE TO TAKE THE CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY HOME. OSU PITCHER SOPHIA BOLSER (SHOWN TO THE LEFT, HOLDING CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY) AND THE TEAM HAD A DIFFERENT IDEA IN MIND. GREAT SOFTBALL WAS PLAYED BY BOTH SIDES AS OHIO STATE BUILT A LEAD AND ATTEMPTED TO HOLD ON TO IT FOR THE WIN. ILLINOIS CONTINUED TO BATTLE UNTIL THE END, BUT THE BUCKEYES TOOK HOME THE TITLE WITH A 4-2 WIN. PITCHING ALL 3 GAMES FOR THE CHAMPS, SOPHIA THREW A TOTAL OF 21 INNINGS AND ALLOWED ONLY 3 RUNS TO BE SCORED. AS THE SAYING GOES, "DEFENSE WINS CHAMPIONSHIPS."

TEAM PRESIDENT CHRISSEY RANKIN (PICTURED TO THE LEFT, LOWER PICTURE) SPOKE AFTER THE GAME ABOUT THE TEAM'S MINDSET THAT HELPED LEAD THEM TO VICTORY. "OUR GOALS FOR THE SEASON WERE TO WIN OUR CONFERENCE, WIN REGIONALS, AND GO ON TO NATIONALS. TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS, WE REALLY FOCUSED ON PLAYING WITHIN OURSELVES, MEANING NOT LETTING OUTSIDE FACTORS AFFECT OUR PLAYING, AND TO HAVE FUN. IF YOU HEARD US WHILE ON THE FIELD DURING OUR GAMES THIS PAST WEEKEND, WE STRESSED HAVING FUN SO MUCH, IT



RELAXES THE GIRLS AND REINFORCES THE REASON OF WHY WE ARE PLAYING. WHEN WE HAD TO PLAY WITH EIGHT GIRLS AGAINST ECU FOR THE THIRD GAME [OF THE CONFERENCE SERIES], OUR SHORTSTOP, JULIA, FOUND A LITTLE TOY ARMY MAN ON THE FIELD. ON THAT DAY WE CALLED HIM OUR '9TH MAN' TO HELP US WITH OUR FOCUS. WE BROUGHT HIM TO REGIONALS WHERE OUR '9TH MAN' BECAME OUR LITTLE MASCOT AND REMINDER TO HAVE FUN FOR THE WEEKEND."

OHIO STATE AND ILLINOIS WILL BOTH REPRESENT THE GREAT LAKES REGION AT THE 2013 NCSA WORLD SERIES TOURNAMENT IN COLUMBUS, GEORGIA WHICH STARTS ON MAY 17TH. BEST OF LUCK TO BOTH TEAMS!

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