

TIGERS IN THE NEWS

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THE WORLDS FAVORITE SOFTBALL TEAM

The Woodlands softball beats Klein Collins 4-3 in Game 1



The Woodlands' Faith Bohack tags out Klein Collins' Elissa Heaton at second base Friday at The Woodlands High School.

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THE WOODLANDS — Trailing the nation's top-ranked team by one run, Klein Collins made two baserunning blunders in the sixth inning and The Woodlands held on for a 4-3 Game 1 win in the teams' best-of-three Region II-5A quarterfinal series on Friday night.

Lady Tigers third baseman Angelica Gonzales led off the top of the sixth inning with a single up the middle. One batter later, Marlee Maples beat out an infield hit and ran through first base before turning toward second.

Lady Highlander first baseman Jessica Snyder, who had reeled in the throw from second and was facing the infield, turned

her back to tag Maples and Gonzales took off for third.

"Marlee beat the play out at first and she turned into the field, so (Snyder) was going for the tag and our team did a great job of communicating, telling her that (Gonzales) was going to third," The Woodlands coach Richard Jorgensen said. "Jessica came off that play and made a great throw, and (third baseman) Brooke (Riemann) put a heck of a tag on her."

Maples, with Laura Lopez at the plate and now one out, advanced to second when a pitch bounced out of Lady Highlander catcher Kayla Prater's glove. Two pitches later, Lopez struck out swinging on a dropped third strike.

Prater located the ball and fired to first to put out Lopez, and this time Maples took off for third. Snyder and Riemann reprised their role from moments earlier, the junior firing across the diamond to the senior, who tagged Maples out to end the inning and the threat. "(It cost us) big time because we could've advanced them on a bunt and squeezed them in," Klein Collins coach Rosie Rhodes said.



The Woodlands' Alyssa Jorgensen and Faith Bohack had back-to-back two-out singles in the bottom of the sixth, but Lady Tiger pitcher Taylor Grissom got Riemann to pop out to shortstop.

With Klein Collins (29-8) down to its last three outs in the seventh, the home crowd rose to its feet and cheered wildly. Paige McDuffee responded, needing only six pitches to close out the victory. She got a sharp groundout back to the circle, a slow roller to second and Snyder's flip to Jorgensen covering first.

"We had kind of been rolling through district and then the first round of the playoffs," Jorgensen said. "Last week, Pflugerville — I hate to use the word — they were scrappy. They just kept coming and coming and I think that really helped us for tonight."

Trailing 1-0 after Gonzales' solo blast in the top of the first, The Woodlands (37-0) went to work in the bottom half. Kelsey Jolly drew a leadoff walk and was on the run when Jorgensen singled to left field. The senior center fielder blazed around third base and slid headfirst into home well ahead of a high throw, knotting the score 1-1. Two batters later and with Jorgensen on third, Riemann dropped an unsuccessful suicide squeeze. But McDuffee followed with a single, Snyder walked and Taylor O'Dell lined a two-run single for a 3-1 lead.

The Lady Highlanders added a run in the second when Bohack's one-out single to center scored Jolly, who had walked. The Woodlands left the bases loaded, though, when McDuffee's attempted suicide squeeze resulted in a force out at home and Snyder lined out to short.



Klein Collins bit back two innings later after Gonzales was hit by a pitch leading off the fourth. She fired the ball back to McDuffee in the circle, drawing a long stare from the UCLA commit that resulted in the home plate umpire briefly calling Jorgensen and Rhodes together in the infield. "She's a leader on the field," Rhodes said of Gonzales.

Maples hit a hard single off the glove of Bohack at short and advanced to second when the throw went to third, putting two runners in scoring position with none out.

Lopez executed a suicide squeeze to cut the deficit to 4-2, and Elissa Heaton followed with an RBI groundout to second. After December Rivers grounded out to short, Lopez was stranded on third when Paeton Tanley lined out to center field. McDuffee (30-0) struck out five, allowing seven hits and three earned runs in seven innings.

"They saw that they could do it," Rhodes said of her team. "They're a good hitting team. I think they have confidence in themselves. Once the saw they could hit, it was like they played all year."

With two outs in the first, Gonzales hit an opposite-field home run to right-center on the eighth pitch of the at bat. She made an amazing catch in foul territory near the third-base dugout in the fifth inning after Snyder had seemingly fouled one off.

Grissom allowed seven hits, four runs — three earned — and four walks in six innings while striking out Bohack on a changeup to end the fourth. Game 2 is scheduled for 6 p.m. Saturday at Klein Collins. Game 3, if necessary, will be played 30 minutes after the conclusion of Game 2. The series winner will play either Belton or Mesquite Horn in the regional semifinals next week.

"We made some costly mistakes on the basepaths, but if we continue to hit we're going to be all right," Rhodes said. The Lady Highlanders will make some adjustments for tomorrow, but Jorgensen didn't want to reveal anything. "We saw some things that we're going to work on," he said.



The Woodlands 4, Klein Collins 3

Klein Collins 100 200 0 — 3 7 2

The Woodlands 310 000 X — 4 7 0

Records — Klein Collins: 29-8. The Woodlands: 37-0.

WP: Paige McDuffee (30-0; 7 IP, 7 H, 3 R, 3 ER, 4 K, HB)

LP: Taylor Grissom (7 IP, 7 H, 4 R, 3 ER, K, 4 BB, HB)

Leaders — Klein Collins: Angelica Gonzales 2-2, HR, 2 R, HBP; Elissa Heaton 1-3, RBI; Laura Lopez 1-3, RBI; Marlee Maples 2-3, R; Paeton Tanley 1-2. The Woodlands: Taylor O'Dell 1-2, 2 RBI, BB; Alyssa Jorgensen 3-4, 2B, RBI; Faith Bohack 2-4, RBI; Kelsey Jolly, 0-2, 2 R, 2 BB; Brooke Riemann 0-3, R, HBP; Paige McDuffee 1-3; Sidney Salmans R; Jessica Snyder 0-2, BB.