

## Mustangs have Heart, reach Final 4

Written by Jim Ecker  
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Tawny Menster knows her college softball career will end at some point this month, but she's really glad it did not happen Thursday night.

Menster pitched a complete and the Mount Mercy Mustangs capitalized on a huge break for a 6-2 victory over Central Methodist in a losers bracket game in the Heart of America Conference tournament at Busse Field.

The Mustangs (32-21) have already staved off two elimination games and they'll try to do it again when they face Benedictine (28-25) Friday at 2:30 p.m. on Day 3 of the tournament.

Baker (43-7) and Grand View (43-8), a pair of NAIA Top 20 powers, meet in the winners bracket final Friday at noon. If Mount Mercy beats Benedictine at 2:30, the Mustangs would face Baker or Grand View in the losers bracket final Friday at 5 p.m.

The championship round is Saturday.

Mount Mercy trailed 2-1 in the bottom of the sixth inning when they got the biggest break of the tournament. They had the bases loaded with two outs, but the threat appeared to be over when pinch-hitter Jaicee Lyons hit a pop-up right behind second base.

The Central Methodist shortstop settled under the pop-up for the third out, but the ball popped out of her glove for a two-run error that gave Mount Mercy a 3-2 lead.

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~~Plenty of heart, but not much skill. The Mustangs' pitching staff, led by senior pitcher Kaitlyn Smith, was out of control, throwing 100 pitches in the first inning alone. The team's offense was also out of control, hitting 10 home runs in the first inning alone. The game was a complete mess, and the Mustangs were embarrassed.~~