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Softball Drops 17-10 Slugfest To #11 Oklahoma

Rookie Lauren Brennan drives in a career-high four runs and hits first career homer for the Flames.

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Box Score

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Las Vegas, Nev. - The UIC softball team looked to have its first win over a nationally ranked team this season in its grasp, leading 8-0 after the first two innings of its contest with #11 Oklahoma on Friday night. But the Sooners had other ideas, rallying back on a pair of occasions for a 17-10, eight-inning victory over the Flames in an unusual slugfest at the Las Vegas Classic.

UIC has now dropped five straight games and sits at 7-9 on the season. Oklahoma, meanwhile, has won 16 consecutive contests and is 18-4 on the year.

Freshman pitcher Mercedes Lovato (5-3), who entered with the Flames trailing 9-8 in the top of the fifth, suffered the loss.

She pitched 2 1/3 scoreless innings as UIC came back to force the contest into extra innings, but then surrendered eight runs on seven hits during Oklahoma's eighth inning rally.

Junior Brittany McIntyre started for the Flames and allowed nine runs, five earned, on 11 hits in 4 2/3 innings.

Freshman Lauren Brennan homered and tallied four RBI versus #11 Oklahoma on Friday.

Oklahoma ace Kami Keiter came on in relief and picked up her eighth win of the season. UIC did snap Keiter's scoreless inning streak at 42 1/3 with its seventh-inning tally which tied the score.

The Flames jumped out early on the Sooners on Friday at Eller Media Field, plating five runs on five hits in the first inning off starter Nicole Denes.

Nicole Robinson and Sara Hernandez started the surge with RBI singles and then rookie Lauren Brennan capped the frame with her first career home run, a three-run blast.

UIC went up 8-0 in the bottom of the second inning, plating three more runs off reliever Stacy Braddock.

Robinson drove in the first run when she was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded. Junior Nicole Shepard followed with an RBI single and then freshman Brittany Dixon scooted home on a wild pitch to give the Flames a seemingly comfortable cushion.

In the fourth, the Sooners took a big chunk out of UIC's lead as a critical error in the field opened the flood gates to four unearned runs in a five-run inning off McIntyre.

The rally was capped by a two-out, three-run homer off the bat of Heather Scaglione, her fourth of the year.

Oklahoma would come all the way back to take the lead in the fifth.

Back-to-back homers to open the inning by Jamie Fox and Tayl'r Hollis pulled the Sooners to within a run, 8-7. Later in the frame, Scaglione laced a two-run triple that put OU in front, 9-8.

The Flames did not go away, though, rallying to send the game into extra innings with a tally in the bottom of the seventh. UIC loaded the bases with one out off Keiter and then Brennan recorded her fourth RBI of the day with a fielder's choice grounder.

In the eighth, under international tie-breaker rules, Oklahoma broke through with another big inning, plating eight runs on seven hits off of reliever Lovato.

UIC would score a run on an RBI groundout by senior Cameron Astiazaran in the bottom of the eighth for the final 17-10 margin.

The Flames will be back in action tomorrow, when they complete play at the Las Vegas Classic by taking on #14 Washington.