



Mulvane's Sean Smith (44) stretched for more yards and more mud Friday in comeback victory against Rose Hill

Comeback In Mud

Wildcats Clean Up At Rose Hill

In the mud and the sweat and the tears, Mulvane High School found a four-leaf clover, too, Friday night, Oct. 21, at Rose Hill.

And there was "joy in Mudville" as "the hogs" got sloppy.

The Wildcats took advantage of the key plays and turned them into game-busters Friday to edge past Rose Hill's Rockets, 16-12, in the second district game of the season. Coupled with Wellington's thumping of Clearwater, the Wildcats were eliminated from state playoff consideration, but there were a lot of smiles in the Wildcat locker room once all the mud was wiped off.

On an extremely muddy field, Mulvane's gridders came through following an odd series of events to score the winning touchdown with 35 seconds left in the game.

"It was a big, big win for our program," beamed Dave Fennewald, who is about to complete his third season of guiding the Cat FB program. "We had been struggling the past few weeks, not playing nearly as well as we had earlier and the kids needed a win. I felt like we could get the last two, which would give us four and one more than we had last year. The seniors also wanted to win it. They responded well."

If the Wildcats can put the stopper on the Clearwater offense at home tonight (Oct. 27) in the season finale, it will enable the Cats to finish with four wins. They had three last year; two in Fennewald's first year.

It was something of an ironic victory because until the final 30 seconds, it looked like a loss. Other than a 76-yard breakaway by junior Jake Carmichael on the second play of the third quarter, Mulvane had not had a drive of more than 30 or 40 yards in the mud. A two-inch rain early in the morning had not drained and the field got worse and worse as the game progressed.

Rose Hill got the first break with 1:50 left in the first quarter when punter Brant Brittingham fumbled the low snap, picked the ball up and slipped and slid around the right side, breaking free at the line of scrimmage on the way to a 44-yard TD run.

A short Mulvane punt gave the Rockets another opportunity in the second quarter, tak-

ing the ball over at the 49. After a successful gamble on a fourth-and-one at the 29, the MHS defense stopped the drive and Brittingham slammed home a 31-yard field goal.

Trailing, 9-0, at intermission, the Cats wasted little time with Carmichael rambling 76 yards around the right side. A two-point conversion made it 9-8.

Neither team could score again until the Rockets took over at the 49 after a fake punt by the Wildcats with 7:40 left and drove down to the MHS 14-yard line. Brittingham, one of the top kickers in the state, trotted out and boomed in a 27-yarder with 3:12 left in the game.

On the kickoff, Brittingham slipped on the kick and it bounced 10 yards into the arms of Mulvane's Noble Greenberg, who charged up the middle and was finally stopped at the RH 44. On second down, quarterback Scott Sanchez lobbed an aerial to senior Shawn Erbert, who had gotten past the RH secondary and gathered the pass in. He was finally tackled at the one-yard line. It was Mulvane's only completion of the game.

Mulvane tried a sneak and it lost a half-foot. The Cats ran right and lost more than a yard, then tried left and failed to gain. After a time out and with time flying, on fourth down, Sanchez faked to a back going left, then circled the right flank with senior Casey Myers leading the way. He dove into the corner of the end zone with 35 ticks left on the clock. The same play to the left worked successfully on the extra point.

"We were all cheering for them to make the field goal because it didn't mean anything," said Fennewald. "We still would have had to score a touchdown to beat them, and when they had the short kickoff, that was the best thing that could have possibly happened."

Mulvane hasn't tried a field goal this year and hasn't made a P.A.T. kick all season, thus it didn't matter whether RH was two points ahead or five. Mulvane still needed a TD to win.

Had the field goal missed, Mulvane would have faced 80 yards of an extremely

muddy field to negotiate, and as far as the short kickoff, a deep kickoff would have given the Cats the same option—mud and more mud with less than two minutes to play.

"I really thought they were going to fake the field goal on fourth down but they didn't," said Fennewald. "He's a great kicker and I was praying he made it."

So, the climax of the game was played out like it was pre-destined for the Wildcats to rally. Everything that had to go right did.

Mulvane finished with 179 yards offense with Carmichael finishing with 81 yards in 10 tries. Sean Smith had 36 more yards and Sanchez had 23 yards.

Defensively, Dustin Rhodes had a career game—making 18 tackles. Joey Caskey had 15 tackles, Myers had 15, Drew Roberts had 14 stops and both Steve Farber and John Moore had 11 tackles.

Mulvane	0	0	8	8-16
Rose Hill	6	3	0	3-12

Touchdowns—Mulvane: Jake Carmichael (76, run), Scott Sanchez (2, run). Rose Hill—Brant Brittingham (44, run).

Points after touchdown—Mulvane: Sanchez 4 (2 runs).

Field goals—Rose Hill: Brittingham 2 (31, 27).

	TEAM STATISTICS	
	Mulvane	Rose Hill
First Downs	7	10
Total Yards	179	179
Yards Rushing	136	179
Yards Passing	43	0
Passes Attempted	4	2
Passes Completed	1	0
Passes Intercepted By	1	0
Punts/Average	4-26	4-38
Fumbles Lost	1	0
Yards Penalized	25	20

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing

Mulvane—Jake Carmichael 10 carries-81 yards, Sean Smith 15-36, Shawn Erbert 4-4, Scott Sanchez 7-23. Rose Hill—Ben Hammit 18-67, Mike Ring 13-47.

Passing

Mulvane—Scott Sanchez 1 completion-4 attempts-43 yards-0 interceptions-0 TD. Rose Hill—Ryan Pursley 0-2-0-1-0.

Receiving

Mulvane—Shawn Erbert 1 catch-43 yards.

Defensive Statistics

Dustin Rhodes 18 tackles, Joey Caskey 15, Casey Myers 15, Drew Roberts 14, Steve Farber 11, John Moore 11, Eric Erbert 9, Troy Turner 6, Shawn Erbert 5, Mike Johnson 5, Ty McMahon 3, Noble Greenberg 2, Steve Heersche 2, Neil Gosch 3, Todd Fagan 1, James Starkweather 1, Jeremy Brown 1, Scott Sanchez 1. Interception—Eric Erbert.