

Girls BB Blues Swept Away

For the last four and one-half games, the Mulvane High School Wildcat girls have had the blues.

Tuesday night, Jan. 22, in the opening round of the 28th annual Mulvane Wildcat Girls Classic, Mulvane washed those blues away as they swept past Arkansas City, 49-42, in the opening round of the tournament.

No. 1 seeded Garden Plain drilled Wellington, 60-21, in the other game Tuesday night and will play the Wildcats in the 8 p.m. game tonight with the winner advancing to the championship game.

"We played like we've been playing lately, kind of sluggish, in the first half but our ladies came out in the third quarter and were more aggressive at both ends of the court," said Coach Dale Landes. "At halftime, I challenged them to play with more intensity and they responded."

The Bulldogs held MHS to only 13 points in the first half. The Cats responded by scoring 21 in the 3rd quarter alone to take the lead, 34-32, going into the last quarter, then pulled away in the last minute by making five of six free throws, sailing away the victory.

"You have to credit the girls for responding," said Landes. "We started hitting the shots in the second half and Melinda McKeer and Taylor Parsons came up big for us. Taylor was a big key. That's what we've missed with her out."

Parsons finished with a game-best 15 points and nine rebounds. McKeer pitched in 14 points. Stephanie Wilson had eight points and both Courtney Becker and Katie Ybarra closed out the scoring with six points apiece.

Mulvane's finale tune-up before the tournament opener wasn't a thing of beauty but there was a ray of hope in the middle of a whipping.

Playing at home didn't seem to help Coach Landes' Wildcat girls as Andale came in Friday, Jan. 18, and took the Cats apart in a 53-27 game. The loss dropped Mulvane to 2-8 going into the Wildcat Girls Classic.

"Once again, we played pretty well in the first quarter but from then on, we did a very poor job of handling their pressure," said Landes. "We reverted back to old habits of trying to dribble through the pressure rather than the way we teach the girls in practice, using the pass to beat the press. Consequently, we had a lot of turnovers."

"It's just frustrating when you work it in practice but when you get in a game and there's pressure, you don't handle it."

The ray of hope was the return of

sophomore Taylor Parsons to help strengthen Mulvane's inside game. She has missed six or seven games with an injury. She played occasionally and scored six points.

"We put her in a minute or two at a time," said Landes. "She probably played eight or nine minutes of the game, tops. She was a little rusty but you could tell just in that limited time against Andale that she has something we've been missing for a while, an inside presence."

The Indians and Mulvane slugged it out in the first quarter before Andale turned up the torque a bit on its pressure. The visitors immediately out-scored the Cats, 19-5, in the second quarter to take the lead for good. "We just don't adjust well when things get a little difficult," said the Wildcat chief. "We handle the press early but seem to get tired and start making little mental mistakes."

Landes said overall, the Wildcat effort started going downhill after that. The MHS girls committed 20 turnovers and shot only 22% from the field.

But the most puzzling aspect of the basketball game is that Mulvane never went to the line. The Cats never shot a free throw. They were 0-for-0. Meanwhile, Andale went 23 of 29 at the stripe. The 0-for-0 might be a record!

"I don't think the officiating was a

problem," said Landes. "We were just out of position quite a lot. We just didn't do a very good job of being aggressive while we were on offense. We had numerous shots offensively, a lot of good looks at the basket when we broke down the defense. We were just unable to convert."

For Landes, it's a familiar story with a familiar ring. "The opportunities were there, we just didn't convert," said the Wildcat coach. "That's what that 22% from the field tells you."

The Mulvane offense was carried by sophomore Stephanie Wilson, who scored nine points. Parsons' six points helped out and so did Melinda McKeer's four.

After the tournament, the Cats will not play again until Friday, Feb. 1, when they trip to Wellington for a non-league game with the Crusaders.

Mulvane Wildcat Girls Classic Results

FIRST ROUND

Arkansas City	53	8	11	10-42
Mulvane	8	5	21	15-49
Arkansas City-Karley Stued 10, Val White 2, Nikoyle Jordan 2, Natalie Beaman 12, Natalie Stinson 16, FG 13 (12), FT 15-18, F 19				
Mulvane-Melinda McKeer 14, Stephanie Wilson 8, Courtney Becker 6, Katie Ybarra 6, Taylor Parsons 15, FG 19 (2), FT 9 (8), F 16.				

Garden Plain 60, Wellington 21
Rose Hill 61, Campus 36
Wichita Southeast 50, Clearwater 45

28th Mulvane Wildcat Girls Classic Pairings

TODAY (JAN. 24)

Game 3 -- Wichita Southeast vs. Rose Hill, 4:30 p.m.

Game 6 -- Clearwater vs. Campus, auxiliary gym, 6:15

Game 7 -- Wellington vs. Arkansas City, main gym, 6:15

Game 8 -- Garden Plain vs. Mulvane, 8 SATURDAY, JAN. 26

Game 9 (Seventh Place)--losers of games 6 and 7, 2 p.m.

Game 10 (Fifth Place)--winners of games 6 and 7, 3:45

Game 11 (Third Place)--losers of games 5 and 8

Game 12 (First Place)--winners of games 5 and 8, 7:30

Varsity Girls

Andale	7	19	37	10-53
Mulvane	8	3	8	6-27
Andale--Jerrin Reichenberger 4, Karlin Martin 10, Shelby Martin 11, Erin Carney 4, Adrienne Fox 9, Melissa Easter 8, Baylei Hall 7, FG 15 (10), FT 23-29, F 10				
Mulvane--Melinda McKeer 4, Stephanie Wilson 9, Taylor Parsons 6, Courtney Becker 3, Haylee Smith 2, Kayla Mason 2, Maddie Wise 2, FG 13 (1), FT 0-0, F 25.				

Junior Varsity Girls

Andale	9	6	12	15-42
Mulvane	11	14	6	12-43
Andale--Kati Miles 3, Rachel Macart 5, Janna Carney 13, Madeline May 3, Emma Davis 2, Destina Bani 4, Anissa Jones 3, Ann Beggar 4, FG 17 (1), FT 7-17, F 11.				
Mulvane--Taylor Bell 2, Haylee Smith 8, Courtney Matkowski 4, Tater Pulliam 3, Sydney Locke 3, Kelsey Miller 22, Julie Gusch 5, Meredith McKeer 10, Kayla Morson 1, FG 16 (3), FT 8-14, F 19.				