

## Slow Start Haunting

# Haven Not Safe For Girls

The first eight minutes of the game, was the game.

A poor start dictated an uphill battle for the Mulvane High School girls, a battle that ended their season Monday night, Feb. 25, in Haven. The Cats started off in an 18-2 hole and never recovered in a 49-40 loss to the Haven Wildcats in the opening round of the Andale 4A Sub-State.

Haven scored the first 14 points of the game as the MHS Wildcats seemed jittery. Mulvane's first basket came with 20 seconds left in the opening quarter. And when Haven scored the first two buckets of the 2nd quarter, it left Coach Dale Landes' girls reeling.

"We came out really flat," said Landes. "We have struggled at times all season with playing with passion. When we play like we did in the second half, with intensity and passion, we do okay. But when we play like we did in the first half, with little purpose, we fall behind and make errors."

The sub-state game was indeed a tale of two halves for the 7th seeded Wildcats from Mulvane and the 2nd seeded Wildcats from Haven. The hosts ripped out to a huge lead but a bucket by Haylee Smith with 3:40 left in the 3rd quarter brought the Cats back to within 10, 26-16, and seconds later, it was down to eight, 26-18.

But Mulvane could get no closer down the stretch. They did cut it to eight, 41-33, on a steal and a rebound bucket by Stephanie Wilson with 2:24 left in the contest.

It marked the seventh straight year the Wildcat girls have bowed out in the opening round of sub-state play. The Cats haven't won a sub-state game since the 2000-01 season when they advanced by beating Douglass by a 55-33 count.

After playing like the team that couldn't shoot or pass straight in the first half, the Cats came out after intermission with purpose.

"There was a lot of yelling at half-time and it was all one sided," said Landes, "and the girls responded by playing with some fire in the second half. Haven's quickness bothered us and when we weren't strong with the ball, they took it away. Eventually, we played with more aggression. When you dig a hole like the one we dug, it's a long ways back.

"I was definitely pleased and proud of the way the girls came back," added Landes. "They showed a lot of character to come back from such a poor start."

Guards Maddie Wise and Taylor Bell and senior Courtney Becker did a great job pressuring.

Sophomore Stephanie Wilson paced the Cat scoring with 14 points and Wise finished with a season-best 11. Senior

Melinda McKee and Becker scored four points each and Taylor Parsons scored three as she battled foul trouble the whole game.

The Wildcat girls didn't get a chance to build more momentum from their home victory against Augusta. It would have been a tough call anyway, since they were going to travel to Buhler for the regular season finale Thursday night, Feb. 21.

After all, the Crusaders won the Ark Valley Chisholm Trail League Division III. That game was cancelled by bad weather late that afternoon.

The cancellation left the Wildcats at 3-6 in the league and 6-13 overall. It didn't have an impact on the standings since Mulvane finished 5th ahead of El Dorado, which posted a 2-8 record.

It was, however, the first time in memory a scheduled game was not played during the basketball season.

"It would have been nice to play Buhler to see their pressure again and to help get ready for Haven," said Coach Landes. "On the flip side, we have had three practices to get ready for Haven. They only had one practice to get ready for us. That might be an advantage. We immediately went into a practice when we found out the game wasn't going to be played."

Landes said he has four scouting reports from four different coaches to

work his Wildcats on. "They like to pressure and play man-to-man," said Landes. "Our preparation has been geared toward them. Hopefully, that extra preparation will help us."

## Andale Class 4A Girls Sub-State Results

### FIRST ROUND

Mulvane	2	8	9	21-40
Haven	14	12	12	11-49
Mulvane—Maddie Wise 11, Melinda McKee 4, Katie Ybarr 2, Stephanie Wilson 14, Haylee Smith 2, Taylor Parsons 3, Courtney Becker 4. FG 18 (1), FT 3-5, F 27.				

Haven—Emily Ostlund 7, Sheridan Sarafanski 1, Becca Achilles 11, Paula Stucky 5, Morgan Skomal 13, Ashton Wessler 3, Morgan Troyer 9. FG 15 (3), FT 16-32, F 11.

Andale 45, Cheney 24  
Buhler 64, Wellington 29  
Clearwater 48, Junction 45

## SUB-STATE PAIRINGS

Tonight (Feb. 28)

SEMIFINAL ROUND

6 p.m.—Buhler (16-4) vs. Clearwater (15-6)

7:30—Haven (17-4) vs. Andale (16-5)

Saturday, March 1

CHAMPIONSHIP

6 p.m. (First Place)—winners of Thursday's games, 7:30 p.m.

Regular Season

Mulvane girls game at Buhler Thursday, Feb. 21, was cancelled by bad weather and will not be played