

State--Mixed Bag For MHS Athletes Mulvane Lucky Stars Clouded

MANHATTAN—If the Mulvane Wildcats and Coach Dave Katzenmeier didn't have bad luck, they wouldn't have had any luck at all Friday, May 29, in the opening round action in the 1992 Class 4A State Baseball Tournament at Frank Myers Park.

They say you make your luck but Mulvane's 8-4 loss in the first round to Thomas More Prep in Hays was anything but skill prevailing. From the warm-ups on, the Monarchs were on a roll that bordered on voo doo dolls.

No. 2 seeded Baxter Springs ran away with the 4A state title Saturday, May 30, by stopping Nickerson cold, 8-1, in the championship game. Tonganoxie won 3rd place by cooling down Thomas More, 4-1.

Friday's opening action was more than a disappointment for Mulvane's Wildcats. It was downright painful, especially for ace pitcher Jarrod Oldridge.

Oldridge, he of the 1.63 earned run average, was penciled in to show TMP his stuff in the first game but the Monarchs only got to see three Oldridge pitches before he had to be removed. A back spasm killed Mulvane's opportunity to do what the Wildcats had done in 1986—win the state championship.

"We got a real big shot of bad luck, we sure did," admitted Katzenmeier. "That's about all we can say about it. I know he was in pain when I went out there and he was hurting in two ways, I'm sure. I know he was hurting physically and he also knew

this was it, that he wouldn't be coming back. That had to hurt, too."

Oldridge threw three pitches and couldn't continue because of the pain. In came sophomore righthander Jamie Belden and junior Robert Glaser replaced him in the second inning. The trouble was, the loss of Oldridge simply stunned the other Wildcat players and until they finally got their composure back, TMP had scored in numerous inconceivable manners.

"We lost our intensity and focus on things for a while when Jarrod went out," said Katzenmeier. "You plan and plan and plan all week and suddenly, your plays have got to be changed. Everybody was trying to get it going again, but that was a pretty good kick in the teeth. It was something we had to overcome to be successful, but we weren't able to completely do that. The kids kept trying, though."

The Monarchs, who came into the game with a 19-3 record, scored four runs in the first inning and added another tally in the second and one in the third before Glaser got the bleeding to stop.

After taking over for the injured Oldridge, Belden walked the first two batters. After a force out and a strikeout, it appeared Belden had quelled the uprising but a passed ball that probably went eight feet from catcher Chuck Rollins enabled the first runner to score. The umpire sliding to the side appeared to block the catcher's view of the ball. A base hit by winning pitcher Danny Dinkel brought in a run, the second scoring on a disputed play at the plate. Rollins tagged the runner at the plate but he was called safe.

Instead of the third out, TMP went on to score two more. Thomas More scored one more in second when Glaser, who came in with runners at the corners, fanned the Monarch's clean-up hitter but the ball was in the dirt. For some reason, Rollins fired the ball to second base trying to get the runner when he could have just thrown the ball to first for the force. A run scored.

"We all lost our intensity and focus for a while," said Katzenmeier. "We were off-balance and trying to get our balance. It was just one of those things."

TMP finally scored in standard fashion with a triple, then a single in the 3rd inning to make it 5-0 before Mulvane finally got something started offensively. Rollins reached on an error at third and scored



Coach Katzenmeier talks situation over with Chad Nichols at 3rd base

when senior David Boyer rapped a double down the rightfield line.

TMP answered with two more scores under strange circumstances. Glaser gave up a single and double to start the 5th before settling down. His balk, only the second of the season for Wildcat pitchers, delivered one run and moments later, a wild pitch allowed another runner to score.

The Wildcats got after Dinkel in the 5th inning and appeared to have him on the ropes. Chad Nichols started the three-run rally with a hit and went to third on a ground out and a passed ball. Junior Larry Dixon walked in front of Glaser's RBI base hit. Jeremy Kendrick walked to fill the bases before Rollins lined a two-out hit to the fence. All three runners scored and Rollins ended up at third but the ball had

slipped through the only small hole in the entire fence.

More bad luck. Rollins had to go back to second and Kendrick back to third on the ground rule double.

That was all the offense for Mulvane, as the Cats went down in order in the final two innings.

"It seems like everything that could go against us did. It was one thing after another," said Katzenmeier. "We made a valiant effort to comeback. The ball that Chuck hit should have scored three and who knows where he would have ended up if they had misplayed the relay."

"It was a tough loss. We would have loved to go on playing on Saturday, but once the end comes, you try to shake hands and tell the seniors good-bye."

MULVANE Sports

Class 4A State Baseball Championship

CHAMPIONSHIP

Baxter Springs 8, Nickerson 1

THIRD PLACE

Tonganoxie 4, Thomas More Prep 1

SEMIFINALS

Nickerson 6, Tonganoxie 4

Baxter Springs 15, Thomas More Prep 7

FIRST ROUND

Thomas More Prep 411 020 0-8 9

Mulvane 000 130 0-4 7

Danny Dinkel and B.J. Staab; Jarrod Oldridge, Jamie Belden 1, Robert Glaser 2, and Chuck Rollins.

Tonganoxie 1, Kansas City Piper 0

Nickerson 6, Parsons 1

Baxter Springs 9, Paola 0

1992--A Season To Remember

An off day in the state tournament isn't going to spoil the summer for Mulvane High School baseball coach Dave Katzenmeier.

"I'm going to remember the good things, the good season we had," said Katzenmeier of the just-completed Wildcat baseball season. Mulvane finished the year with a 15-7 log after getting knocked out in the opening round of the Class 4A State Baseball Tournament in Manhattan Friday, May 29. "We had a super year. We didn't have a lot of outstanding baseball players but we had a bunch who knew what it took to win games and that's what they did."

The Cats, who tied for 4th in the Chisholm Trail League standings with Nickerson, both with 13-6 loop marks, were all over the competition most of the time. Although expected to finish on down the league ladder, Mulvane made things interesting by beating Wellington twice and splitting with Maize and Valley Center. All three finished ahead of Mulvane in the standings only because the second game at Nickerson was postponed and later cancelled because of rain. The Cats had a big lead into the 5th inning of that contest.

"It was a good season, 15-7, a regional championship and a berth in the state tournament, you've got to feel pretty good about it," said Katzenmeier. "We'll have a good nucleus coming back for next year,

too, but we're losing some key people."

Katzenmeier said one factor in the success was chemistry. "It was just a bunch of good kids getting together and pulling together," said the MHS coach. "The kids' chemistry was excellent, and they pulled together well. They worked hard and it paid off for them."

Like nothing else, defense was the glue which brought the Wildcats to the top. "We worked since March 2 on playing good, sound defense and this group could play defense really well," stressed the Cat skipper.

Mulvane Baseball Final 1992 Statistics Mulvane Wildcats (15-7)

Hitting Statistics

Player	AB	H	R	RBI	Avg.
Chuck Rollins	57	25	17	12	.438
Robert Glaser	55	22	17	24	.400
Steve Nelson	86	34	21	16	.395
Larry Dixon	72	28	19	17	.388
Schaan Buford	42	16	5	6	.380
Daniel Myears	39	13	16	5	.333
David Boyer	65	18	15	6	.276
Chad Nichols	39	10	14	7	.256
Jeremy Kendrick	24	6	6	2	.250
Jarrod Oldridge	53	13	20	13	.245
Gary Cleverdon	45	11	5	5	.244
Others	6	0	0	0	.000

Pitching Statistics

Player	IP	SO	ER	Sv	Record
Jarrod Oldridge	44	78	1.63	1	7-1
Robert Glaser	35	30	5.40	4	2-1
Jamie Belden	26	19	4.15	0	3-4
David Boyer	31	21	6.38	0	3-1
Chad Nichols	2	1	9.0	0	0-0

"It's something that will be consistent. You may go 0-for-8 at the plate or your pitching might be off, but the defense is always there. A good example of that was Chad Nichols at shortstop. He came in as a raw player but he worked to get better at shortstop, he worked hard and he did get better."

Add in some fine pitching and you come up with a special season. "Our pitchers really found themselves this year," said Katzenmeier. "Jarrod Oldridge found his groove and did a great job, and Robert Glaser also found his groove. He became a really great No. 2 pitcher. Jamie Belden and David Boyer also did a good job, especially early."

Catcher Chuck Rollins, a solid player for two seasons, was the top hitter on this year's Wildcat team. He hit an outstanding .438 in addition to playing some fine defense behind the plate. Rollins had 12 RBIs.

Others in the top in hitting were the junior Glaser at .400, junior Steve Nelson at .395, junior Larry Dixon at .388, junior Schaan Buford at .380 and Daniel Myears at .333.

In the RBI column, the No. 1 Wildcat was Glaser, who plated 24 runners with hits. Dixon finished second-high with 17 RBIs, Nelson had 16, senior standout Oldridge had 13 and Rollins finished with 12, including two big ones in the opening round loss at Manhattan.

Nelson, a slap-hitter who led the club with 34 hits, also paced the Wildcats in runs scored. He had 21. Oldridge, who battled out of an early-season slump, finished strongly and scored 20 times, and Dixon, a three-year starter, scored 19.

Senior Gary Cleverdon, coming off a severe knee injury suffered during football season, provided some fine senior leadership and also got his bat going after missing the first six games. He had five RBIs and scored five times.

On the hill, Mulvane had one of the top one-two punches around with the stellar Oldridge and the junior Glaser, who worked his way to the No. 2 spot at mid-season. Oldridge finished the season with a fine 7-1 record and a 1.63 earned run average, one of the best marks in the area. He also had 78 strikeouts and overcame the control problem he had as a junior and sophomore starter which made him even more effective.

Glaser finished with a 2-1 record and recorded a team-high four saves. His E.R.A. was 5.40. Belden, a sophomore, also had himself a good year as he posted a second-best 4.15 earned run mark. He had 19 strikeouts in 26 innings, finishing the season with a 3-4 mark. Boyer, a senior, gave the Cats a big lift in the bullpen, too, as he went 3-1 on the season.