

MHS May Madness

It Must Be Magic

For the fifth—and most improbable—time, Mulvane High School baseball coach David Katzenmeier called on his "May Magic" and it worked.

The Wildcats finally achieved the "both barrels blazing" level Katzenmeier has been preaching about this season and that was enough to mow down Andover, 6-5, Thursday, May 20, in the championship game of the Mulvane Class 4A Regional Baseball Tournament held at the Mulvane sports complex.

Although Mulvane only won five games previously this season, it didn't seem to matter against the Trojans, who rallied in the late innings to make it a thrilling, sitting-on-the-edge-of-your-seat game for the fans gathered.

That qualified the Wildcats for the 4A State Tournament, which opens Friday, May 28, at Myers Field in Manhattan. The Cats are seeded 8th in the eight-team state field but that only leaves more room for "May Magic." Mulvane will play the first game of the tournament at 11 a.m. Friday against No. 1 seeded Baxter Springs. The Lions (15-1) have won the 4A state crown the last two seasons.

Katzenmeier said he doesn't know much about Baxter Springs but he is sure of one thing. "These kids aren't backing down

from anybody," said the veteran MHS coach. "We have our work cut out for us. Baxter Springs has won it the last two years, but we're not going to take a step backward against anybody. We've been beat around this year and played some of the best 5A schools in the state. The pressure's on them.

"What we have to do is throw strikes and hit the ball," added the Wildcat skipper. "The least of my worries is defense because we're playing our best defense of the season right now."

Katzenmeier said he expects Baxter Springs to be a top-notch hitting team with solid pitching. "You have to have that to win

Class 4A State Baseball Tournament Friday, May 28

At Manhattan - Frank Meyers Field

Game 1 — Baxter Springs (15-1) vs. Mulvane (6-16), 11 a.m.

Game 2 — Paola (13-8) vs. Scott City (12-9), 1:30 p.m.

Game 3 — Nickerson (13-4) vs. Bonner Springs (7-9), 4

Game 4 — Parsons (16-2) vs. Topeka Hayden (8-10), 6:30

Saturday, May 29

Game 5 — winners of games 1 and 2, 10 a.m.

Game 6 — winners of games 3 and 4, 12 noon

Game 7 (Third Place)—losers of games 5 and 6, 4 p.m.

Game 8 (Championship)—winners of games 5 and 6, 6:30

state championships," said Katzenmeier.

"What a ball game, it was a good ball game to watch," said Katzenmeier, whose Cats had dispatched Circle, 7-1, earlier in the week to move into the regional title game. Rain forced the game date to be changed twice before finally getting into the books Thursday.

"We did a lot of things well," said Katzenmeier. "We executed the bunt plays, we played good defense. It was just two good teams playing"

There were too many heroes for one game, but Katzenmeier loved every save, every dive, every executed play.

"Everybody was just doing what it takes to go to state," noted Katzenmeier. "Schaan Buford getting that one extra run when he slid around the catcher for a score was a big play, and there was Tim Richardson leading off with three hits, and Steve Nelson bouncing out there with a good bunt. And how can you forget Robert Glaser's sliding grab in rightfield (with two runners on and two out in the sixth inning). What about Larry Dixson's outstanding running catch in centerfield to save a run in the first. Or Dixson powering the ball all over the ball park."

Mulvane broke quickly, scoring five runs in the first three innings to take a 5-1 lead. In the first, Richardson started with a base hit to left and was moved along by Nelson's base knock. Richardson scored on a wild pitch just before Dixson, who hit the fence three times, tripled off the fence in right-centerfield. He scored on a wild pitch also just before Jay Schlegel singled.

Richardson ripped a single in the second inning, scoring a sliding Schaan Buford, who had started the inning with the first of his three singles.

Two more scored in the third when Dixson clubbed a one-out triple off the fence in center, Schlegel pulled an RBI single, Jeremy Kendrick reached on a fielder's choice and Buford laced a single to right for an RBI.

Things got tight before they got better. Justin Holcomb smashed a solo homer 30 feet up on the light pole in centerfield against Cat starter Jamie Belden, and when two more singles followed, Belden appeared to be weakening, but Glaser's sliding catch in right saved the inning.

Zack Siegrist hammered another homer over the left-centerfield wall with one out in the fifth and the Trojans made it a one-run game with two more on three singles and an error in the sixth.

"Belden looked like he was weakening and we had Danny (Myears) warming up but he got out of the inning," said Katzenmeier. "On the sidelines, he still had plenty of fire in his eye and wanted to finish it, so we let him go."

It was a wild one. The Wildcats finished with 10 hits and Andover had 10.

"I'll tell you, there wasn't anyone sitting on the bench who was not paying attention," chuckled Katzenmeier. "It was a good one. The seniors from years past (tradition) stepped up there for us."

This year's trip to the state tournament is the fifth for MHS in Katzenmeier's nine years. The Wildcats, state champions in 1986, also advanced to the state showcase in 1985, 1988 and 1992. Ironically, the last time Mulvane went back-to-back, they won the 4A state championship.

Mulvane 4A Regional Baseball Results

CHAMPIONSHIP

Mulvane	212 100 0—6 14
Andover	100 112 0—5 10

Jamie Belden and Joel Phipps; Justin Holcomb, Mark Walker 4, and Jeff Nash.
HR—Justin Holcomb, Zack Siegrist (A).

First Round Games

Mulvane 7, Circle 1
Andover 2, Rose Hill 1



Wildcat senior Jeremy Kendrick puts down a bunt in regional finale