

Wildcats Bombard Buhler

When the wind blows, strange things happen on the baseball field.

"When the wind blows, you can never have enough runs," Mulvane High School baseball coach David Katzenmeier is given to say.

Katzenmeier's Wildcats were at both ends of that equation when they went to Buhler Thursday, April 7, for a Chisholm Trail League doubleheader.

In the first game, the Wildcats built a huge lead but had to put the Crusaders away with five runs in the last inning for a 16-4 victory. The second game finished in a 9-9 draw after the two teams ran out of daylight. However, Buhler held a 9-1 lead after the first inning before the Cats taught them the "never have enough runs" lesson in the wind.

The game may or may not be finished later in the season, depending upon whether the game has a bearing on sub-state pairings or the league standings.

"Buhler had some injury problems and tried to throw a young kid at us in the first game," said Katzenmeier. "We hit the ball well. It was our best hitting game of the year, but it was a combination of things: his sore arms, our hitting and the wind blowing. When the wind blows that hard (Katzenmeier said it was going at about 40 miles an hour), strange things happen."

The Cats buried Buhler early, scoring five runs in the first inning, then three more in the second for an 8-1 lead. Katzenmeier even felt comfortable enough to take his starter, righthander Jamie Belden, out of the game to give some work to Tim Glaser, who saw his first action of the year on the hill.

"We're trying to prolong Jamie's arm a little and at the same time, give Tim some work," said Katzenmeier. "We had the big lead. It worked out for Jamie. It worked out for Tim because he got some good work. And it worked out for me."

Belden gave up only two hits before Glaser came in. He finished with a four-hitter to pick up the win.

"Even when we were ahead a lot of runs, I tried to impress on the kids that you never can feel safe on a day like this one," said Katzenmeier. "It was kind of a strange day because everybody was playing out of position. Everybody was playing deep because of the wind."

Mulvane started the game on full speed. Shawn Erbert doubled to ignite the first-

inning rally. He scored when Jesse Smith pounded a single up the middle. Tom Nienke reached of a fielder's choice and both runners were safe. Jay Schlegel then walked in front of an RBI single by Shay Vangas before Casey Myers, the club's DH'er, lashed a single which scored two more. Belden singled in the last run of the inning before the first out was made.

Three more in the second enabled Katzenmeier's Cats to put it on cruise control as they batted around again. Smith reached on an error before Nienke got one up in the air and it went for a two-run homer. With two outs, Vangas singled, went to second on an error and scored when Belden slapped his second base hit.

The Wildcats, now 4-1-1 for the year, iced things with five more runs in the seventh inning when consecutive singles by Nienke, Schlegel and Vangas produced one run. After Myers walked, Chad Nulik grounded out with Schlegel scoring. Glaser knocked an RBI single and Smith also had an RBI single in the frame.

In the second game, Mulvane was at the other end of the "you never have enough runs" theory, falling behind, 9-1, as the Crusaders shelled MHS starter Scott Sanchez and the defense crumbled a bit. Myers saved the day, though, by coming in with two down in the first and blanking

FIRST GAME

Mulvane 530 003 5—16 17
Buhler 100 003 0—4 6
Jamie Belden, Tim Glaser 3, and Chad Nulik; Russell, Kornelson 5, Seibert 7, and Channing.
HR—Tom Nienke (M); Heinlein (B).

SECOND GAME

Mulvane 120 150—9 5
Buhler 900 000—9 8
Scott Sanchez, Casey Myers 1, and Chad Nulik; Canning, Seibert 5, Neill 6, and Neill, Canning 5.

Buhler the rest of the way.

Mulvane finally caught up behind a five-run fifth inning and actually should have won it in the sixth but failed. In the fifth, Vangas was hit by a pitch to start the drive. Myers walked and so did Sanchez. Vangas scored on a balk, another run scored on Nulik's sacrifice fly to leftfield. After Glaser and Erbert walked, Smith got plunked by a pitch and that forced in one run. The same thing happened to Nienke before Schlegel's sacrifice fly plated another run.

Myers did the job for Mulvane, giving up only one hit in his stint and striking out seven, which bought time for the Mulvane bats to catch up.

"Myers did a fantastic job for us in relief," said Katzenmeier. "We should have put it away in the fifth. We had a couple runners on but just didn't get the job done. We couldn't punch that last run in. Now, we don't know if we'll be going back there or not to finish the game."

In the nightcap, Myers was the only Mulvane batsman with more than one hit. He had singles in the second and third. Erbert scored three times and Sanchez and David Butler each scored twice.

The Wildcats' didn't get an opportunity to find out if the Buhler comeback had given them any momentum. Their twinbill Monday, April 11, at Andover was washed out by rain. It will be made up Monday, May 9, at Andover.

The next outing for the MHS boys will be today (April 14) when Wellington comes to town for two games. The series will start at 4 p.m. at the Mulvane sports complex, and more than likely, a sweep by either team will give that team a good head of steam in the CTL race. Wellington is 5-1.