



Not this time -- Travis Morgan (31) scurries back safely into first

Wildcats' Bats Sound Off

That noise you heard north of here Monday evening, May 5th, wasn't your normal "Mother Nature thunder." It was the collective cracking of a bunch of Mulvane bats.

The Wildcats sounded all the thunder at Valley Center that night, sweeping two Chisholm Trail League games from the Hornets by identical 14-4 scores.

"I don't know what it was, but I liked it," joked Mulvane Coach Zeke Rash. "We had an offensive explosion like I haven't seen here in quite a long time. I can't remember putting together that many runs in back-to-back games. We just seemed to get a bunch of hits together."

And that meant it was fun time for first-game starter Ryan Rogers and second-game starter Bryce Schumacher. Both coasted with ease, Rogers finishing with a two hitter and Schumacher giving up only five hits before giving way to Cat ace Brian Minks in the final inning.

Chisholm Trail League Baseball Standings

Team	League		Overall	
	W	L	W	L
Maize	7	3	11	3
Goddard	5	3	7	3
Andover	6	4	10	4
Wellington	7	5	9	9
Mulvane	5	5	7	6
Buhler	3	5	3	7
Valley Center	3	7	6	8
Augusta	2	6	4	8
DIVISION II				
Douglass	5	1	11	3
Medicine Lodge	6	2	6	2
Rose Hill	7	3	8	8
Circle	4	2	5	6
Clearwater	0	2	0	8
Belle Plaine	0	6	0	6
Bluestem	0	6	0	8

"It didn't surprise me," noted Rash about the outburst of runs. "I felt like we had been swinging the bats well the last six or eight games. We ran the bases well and put a lot of pressure on their defense. Anytime you do that, you have the opportunity to have big innings. It really deflates the other team."

The Cats, now 5-5 in the league and 7-6 overall, broke the opener open with nine runs in the third inning. Second sacker Darrin Erbert had a double and single in that inning alone and knocked in three runs. Shortstop Chad Gerwick also had two hits and scored once. Pete Myers had two RBIs and Zack Wayman knocked in a run with a base hit.

"Darrin's hit was big because they walked Mike (Johnson) just before that to load the bases," said Rash. "Darrin and Chad made them pay."

Wayman finished with a 3-for-4 night with four RBIs and Johnson finished with a 2-for-2 game, scoring three times.

In the second game, Mulvane ripped off five hits in the first inning to take a 7-0 lead, then turned the game into a laughter by scoring five more times in the second.

Todd Fagan was the bat standout, going 3-for-5 with two doubles, one RBI and one run scored. Minks went 2-for-3 with three runs scored, Johnson went 2-for-2, scoring twice, before taking a seat and Myers, Gerwick and Erbert each had two more hits in the onslaught.

Last week, Maize gave the Wildcat baseballers another opportunity to check the "rankings game," and Coach Rash found out: Mulvane stacked up pretty well against "the big boys." The Cats dominated in the second game behind stout pitching by

senior rightfielder Brian Minks. The score was 8-3. In the first game Thursday, May 1, at home, the Cats were thumped by a 11-6 score by Maize.

If comparative scores are any indication, the 6-5 MHS baseball team is right there "with 'em." Mulvane split with Andover and Andover was ranked in the top five in Class 5A and split with Maize, which was ranked No. 2 in 6A. Douglass, which was ranked in the top five in 3A, was beaten twice by the Wildcats.

"Anytime you can beat a 6A school that's ranked first or second in the state, that's a great achievement," said Rash. "It was the best pitching performance of Brian's four years at Mulvane. He pretty much dominated them. He had one bad inning but other than that, they couldn't touch him."

Minks struck out 10 and walked three as he went the distance, scattering three hits. "I think Brian has put it all together," said the Wildcat coach. "He had a great final inning to save the Andover game and it kind of carried over into this game. His control was just excellent."

In the second game, Mulvane banged out seven hits, five of them coming in two innings when the Cats took charge. "We put together some hits in the second game," admitted Rash. "We had a four-run inning and a three-run inning. When we put hits together, we can score some runs."

The Cats never could get the offense rolling enough to keep up with the Eagles in the first contest. Maize put Mulvane into a catch-up mode in the opening inning by scoring four times, then finished off the job by scoring in six of the seven innings.

"I thought we hit the ball decently in the first game but I was disappointed with the fact that we had some mental breakdowns," stressed Rash. "We were right there in the ball game but we didn't seem to be very sharp. Mental lapses on defense really hurt us. We have a pretty young squad and they're still learning a lot."

The Cats tied the opener with a three-run second behind RBI hits by Matt Phipps (2 RBIs) and Mike Johnson but couldn't keep up with Maize's steady diet of troublesome innings. The visitors left three runners on base in the fourth, two in the fifth and one in the sixth in addition to scoring each of those innings to pull away.

Mulvane's only other runs came in the fourth when Phipps and Todd Fagan both singled with one out. Johnson doubled for one run and Darrin Erbert hit a sac fly to center to deliver Fagan.

The last three innings, though, Mulvane was held without a score, although Chad Gerwick walked and went to third when Travis Morgan singled in the bottom of the last inning. But both were left standing.

FIRST GAME

Mulvane	7	5	0	2	-14	14
Valley Center	0	0	0	0	-4	3

Ryan Rogers and Matt Phipps; Jason Haas, George 2, Ian Houk 5, Kirk 7, and Boone.

SECOND GAME

Mulvane	10	9	3	-15	10
Valley Center	0	4	-4	4	4

Bryce Schumacher, Brian Minks 5, and Matt Phipps; Ivcey, Boone 3, and Wilson.

FIRST GAME

Maize	11	-11	9
Mulvane	0	6	10

Pruitt, Starr 7, and Grimsley; Travis Morgan, Ryan Rogers 4, Hargrove 6, and Matt Phipps
HR Hopson, Farr (Mz).

SECOND GAME

Maize	0	3	3
Mulvane	0	8	12

Fortier and Grimsley, Brian Minks and Matt Phipps.