

BB Cats Steal One!

How many times have you stolen home in the last inning to win a game in your backyard fantasy game? It's every kid's dream.

And it's a dream that Randy Johnson made come true Tuesday night, May 18, in the first round of the Mulvane Class 4A Regional Baseball Tournament at the Mulvane sports complex.

Johnson stole home with two out and two strikes on batter Eric Tatum, tying the regional game against Wellington, and on the next pitch, Wellington's frustrated battery had a passed ball and the winning run raced to the plate in an improbable 6-5 triumph by the Wildcats in the opening round game.

The victory pushed Mulvane into the semifinal game today (May 20) with a date against No. 2 seeded Attica/Chaparral (5-8) at 4:30 p.m. with the winner playing at 7 p.m. for the Regional championship and a chance to advance to the Class 4A State Baseball Championship in Manhattan Friday and Saturday, May 28-29.

In the first Regional game Tuesday,

Nickerson spanked Clearwater, 10-0, and will meet No. 1 seeded Haven (12-8) in the 2 p.m. game today.

The Wildcat rally from a 5-1 deficit was a shocking reversal for Wellington and gave Mulvane its 8th victory in 21 games.

"I've never been a part of a game that ended quite like that," said Cat Coach Zeke Rash. "It was a great comeback for us. The kids kept battling and they showed they have a whole lot of heart."

Mulvane trailed, 5-3, going into the top of the final inning, and even started out with an out. Lucas Powell was jammed but hit a dribbler down the third base line and beat it out to ignite the winning push. Johnson followed by lining a single to center and both runners advanced on a double steal with Brian Dinkel at the plate. Wellington then walked Dinkel to load the bases and set up a force out at any base.

Luke Scott walked, forcing in one run, and what happened next is straight out of the backyard. Garrett Hennes fanned for the

second out, bringing Eric Tatum to the plate with a 1-2 count, Johnson streaked for the plate on a steal attempt and beat the tag to tie the game at 5-5. On the next pitch, the frustrated Crusader battery had a passed ball and Dinkel raced home with the winner.

Speed kills.

"Just last week, Randy and I talked about him stealing home in a game and I thought now was the time," said Rash. "The pitcher had a pretty slow wind-up and we just felt this was a pretty good time for it. The pitcher threw a fastball and Randy got a great jump. Randy just beat the tag. I give him all the credit. Eric didn't know anything about Randy coming, but I had enough confidence in Eric to know that he wouldn't swing if the pitch was a ball."

The winning rally was set up an inning earlier when Hennes walked, stole second and when the throw to second was wild, Hennes came all the way home in another gamble that paid off. "It's sure better to be only two down rather than three going into the last inning and we just took a chance," said Rash about the aggressive base running.

Hennes also saved the game and picked up a victory in the process, his first in quite a while after an injury kept him off the mound for the last month. Rash started senior Nathan Gunter but a fielding error and his own wildness gave the Crusaders a five-run

Mulvane Class 4A Baseball Regional

(At Mulvane sports complex)
TODAY (MAY 20)

Game 3 — No. 1 seeded Haven (12-8) vs. Nickerson (7-14), 2 p.m.

Game 4 — No. 2 seeded Chaparral-Attica (5-8) vs. Mulvane (8-13), 4:30

Game 5 (Championship)—winners of games 3 and 4, 7

First Round Results

Mulvane	010 011 3--6 7
Wellington	005 000 0--5 2

Nathan Gunter, Derek Boyer 4, Garrett Hennes 5, and Jeremiah Webb; Miles Carter, Eric Bean 7, Ryan Brownlee 7, and Brandon Wilmoth.

Nickerson 10, Clearwater 0

3rd inning to take the lead. Derek Boyer got out of the inning but Rash went to Hennes hoping to get the bleeding stopped.

"I can't remember the last time Hennes was on the mound but we went with who I thought was our best pitcher and he came through, shutting them out the rest of the way," emphasized Rash. "As a coach, you hate to have to go through one like that but it was probably the most exciting one I've ever been part of. It was thrilling, and the Mulvane crowd was electric after that. It was buzzing like I've never seen it before. Now, we're hoping to win two more games on Thursday and go to Manhattan."

Mulvane
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