

Cat Baseballers On A Streak Before Return To 'War Zone'

Four wins in the last five games were more valuable than a perfect season to Mulvane High School baseball coach Dave Katzenmeier and his youthful Wildcat ball club.

After leaving the "war zone" tattered and shaken, winning four of five games during the prime time stretch was just what the doctor ordered for the Wildcats.

Mulvane boosted its record to 4-7 after starting the season with six straight losses to the "Goliaths" of the Chisholm Trail League.

The Wildcats swept two home games from Clearwater Monday night, April 17, at

the Mulvane sports complex, 10-4 and 11-6. In a solo game Saturday, the Cats held off Oxford, 7-5, the second game being cancelled because of an Oxford scheduling foul up, and Thursday, April 13, Mulvane won its first game of the year in the nightcap at Rose Hill, blasting off against the Rockets, 18-5. In the opener, RH rallied to take an 11-7 triumph over the Cats.

"Winning two is pretty good but we're going to get back in the 'war zone' pretty quick," said Katzenmeier. "That's why

doing well during the last five games was so vital to us. I thought this was a stretch where we could win some games, and we came out with four wins in those five games, so that was an important step for us.

"The kids just picked it up. Against Clearwater, we hit the ball really well. We kept scoring runs and that was the key. We did a good job offensively and that kept them from getting up with us. And we had a chance to use a lot of our pitching staff because of the number of games we have been playing lately."

In the opener against the Indians, the Wildcats broke it open with four runs in the 5th after Clearwater had closed to within one, 5-4. In that big inning, senior Derek Boyer walked and was sacrificed to second by senior Jared Rice. Jerimiah Webb singled for a run and so did Kyle McGuire, and Ryan McKnight followed that up with a two-run double, then scored on a base knock by Derek Nordquist.

Boyer did the rest by with a tidy seven-hitter that featured no walks but two homers and two doubles. McGuire led the 15-hit assault by Mulvane with two doubles and a single and McKnight, Nordquist, Brian Love, Boyer and Rice all had two hits.

In the nightcap, the Wildcats had 13 hits as sophomore Austin Higinbotham went 3-for-5 with two runs scored, Love knocked in two runs, Luke Scott smacked a solo homer and McGuire went 3-for-3 with two RBIs and one run.

The Cats played Oxford (winning 7-5) Saturday. Scott pitched the winner and also went 2-for-3 with two RBIs. Boyer had two RBIs in Mulvane's clinching four-run sixth and Nordquist went 3-for-3 with two runs scored.

Scott was on cruise control until losing his control in the last inning, hitting two batters and giving up three hits before striking out the final batter with the tying run at the plate. The second game was cancelled because Oxford was scheduled to play in its league tournament later in the day.

The Wildcats went to Rose Hill Thursday and worked a split by winning their first game. Rose Hill trumped the Wildcats, 11-4, in the first game, but the Cats found the range for their biggest hitting game of the year, banging out 19 hits in an 18-5 decision.

FIRST GAME

Clearwater 003 100 0-4 7
Mulvane 131 041 x-10 13
Zimmerman, Currie 3, Hamilton 6, and Hamilton; Derek Boyer and Jerimiah Webb.

SECOND GAME

Clearwater 040 020 0-6 7
Mulvane 432 002 x-11 13
Dalbom, Townsend 2, and Thome; Jared Rice, Brian Love 2, Luke Scott 3, Jake Myers 4, Scott 7, and Jerimiah Webb.
HR--Luke Scott (M).

FIRST GAME

Oxford 001 000 4-5 4
Mulvane 120 004 x-7 8
Trulliger, Cornejo 6, and Bartelson; Luke Scott and Jerimiah Webb.

SECOND GAME

No second game played

FIRST GAME

Mulvane 111 010 0-4 11
Rose Hill 016 004 x-11 14
Jake Scott, and Jerimiah Webb, Cale Carson 2; Shawn Vernia and Brad Bradford
HR--Kyle McGuire (M); Todd Zimmerman (RH).

SECOND GAME

Mulvane 132 165-18 19
Rose Hill 002 210-5 6
Derek Boyer and Jerimiah Webb; Jeff Nickel, Cooper Tracy 5, Brad Bradford 5, Kyle Stearns 6, and Brad Bradford, Jake Billings 5.
HR--Jared Rice, Derek Boyer (M); John Ed Cook, Jake Billings (RH)

"The first game against Rose Hill, I wasn't very pleased because we came out and had some mental lapses to let them come from behind," stressed Katzenmeier. "We just didn't finish the game off like we should. That was one of our more disappointing games because we didn't get the job done when we should have."

Katz's "pep talk" between games lit the inferno that blazed in the Mulvane bats. Boyer was the big gun, going 4-for-5 with a three-run homer in the 5th and scoring three times. Rice homered, too, and scored three times. Love and Higinbotham had three hits each and scored five runs between them, Scott had two hits and three RBIs and catcher Jerimiah Webb went 1-for-3 with one RBI and one run scored.

"That's more like it," said Katzenmeier. "That was definitely our best hitting game. The kids came out with a lot more desire and it came against a pretty good Rose Hill pitcher."

The Cats will have just a couple more home series' this season and one of those will be tonight (April 20) when Buhler comes to town for a 4 p.m. doubleheader. Then on Monday, April 24, Andover will be at the sports complex for two games beginning at 4:30 p.m.



Catcher Cale Carson tags out a Rose Hill runner at home