

Baseball Boys Take 2 Steps Back After Two Weeks Of Progress

It could be called the "Mulvane Two-Step." One step forward and two steps back.

Mulvane High School boys baseball coach Dave Katzenmeier Wildcats continued the dance when Andover came to the Mulvane sports complex Monday, April 24. After showing some improvement in recent games, the Cats "took two steps back" as the Trojans trounced Mulvane in both games. The scores were 14-1 and 14-3.

"We took a couple big steps backwards," confessed Katzenmeier. "We just didn't play well. Both games were just lopsided. All we can do now is go right back out on the practice field and go back to square one and start again. I don't know. We looked like we had been making some progress the last couple of weeks but we didn't play that way against Andover. When you miss routine fly balls, routine ground balls and don't make plays that must be made, you just have to go back and start all over."

The losses left the Wildcats at 4-11 for the year. "And the bad thing is that it doesn't get easier at this point," said the Mulvane coach.

Neither game was much of a contest because the Trojans exploded in the late innings. In the opener, Andover ran off a 5-0 lead in the third and finished off Mulvane with seven runs in the last inning.

The Cats' only run came in the 5th when Ryan McKnight singled, went to second on Derek Nordquist's base hit and Austin Higinbotham singled to load them up. Brian Love singled and one run scored but Andover got out of the jam without more damage.

The nightcap was more of the same for the Trojans, who scored three in the first and went up 4-0 before the Cats retaliated with one in the 2nd inning on Sonny Creekmore's RBI triple that scored McKnight from first.

The Cats added another run in the 3rd when Cale Carson and Higinbotham both walked and Carson scored when Jake Myers ripped a single to left. Before Mulvane

FIRST GAME

Andover	010 102 7	8	17
Mulvane	000 010 0	1	4

Gonzalez and Rigby, Derek Boyer, Jake Myers, 6, Jared Rice, 7, and Jeremiah Webb

SECOND GAME

Andover	310 100	14	14
Mulvane	011 0	3	4

Austin Higinbotham, Brian Love, 4, Pat Myers, 3, Jared Rice, 4, and Cale Carson
HR: Mark Johnson (M)

FIRST GAME

Buhler	001 043	2	10	6
Mulvane	000 000	1	1	3

Miller, Bauer, 7, and Neil, Brian Love, Austin Higinbotham, 5, Jake Myers, 7, and Jeremiah Webb

SECOND GAME

Buhler	000 102	6	7	10
Mulvane	102 000	0	3	6

Archer, Bauer, 7, and Neil, Jared Rice, Austin Higinbotham, 4, and Luke Scott, 6

scored its final run in the 4th, though, Andover had busted things open with 10 runs in the top of the 4th.

Senior Jared Rice singled and so did Creekmore and Rice scooted across one out later when Carson got a base hit up the middle. "We just need to keep working harder," said Katzenmeier.

You don't get many points for getting close. If you did, Katzenmeier's Cats would have a bunch of them racked up this season. Instead, the Wildcats fell to 4-9 on the year with two losses at home against Buhler's Crusaders Thursday, April 20.

Buhler broke away from a 1-0 game with four runs in the 5th inning and went on to a 10-1 victory in the first game and came back with nine runs in the last two innings to wipe out a 3-1 Mulvane lead on the way to a 10-3 verdict. Buhler improved its record to 10-2 with the sweep.

The second game was particularly tough for Katzenmeier and his troops since they had scratched and battled to a 3-0 lead in the third inning. "I hated to lose that lead but I still left the field not feeling terribly bad because we played good baseball," pointed out Katzenmeier. "We saw two

pitchers who are going to go on and be pitching some college ball next year. And really, we did a pretty good job against them. They are probably the best three pitchers we're going to see all year long."

The Mulvane team nearly hung on for a split but the bats went silent in the final four innings with only one hit, a one-out bingo by Sonny Creekmore in the 4th inning. The Cats started game No. 2 by scoring a run when Luke Scott walked and Derek Boyer boomed an RBI double.

The bats thundered in the third when Derek Nordquist singled with one out, Brian Love reached on a catcher's error and Scott belted an RBI single. Boyer singled for a run and Jared Rice followed with a single but the Cats left two runners on.

Buhler pushed across a run in the 4th, then tied it with two unearned runs in the 6th before blowing the game open with seven in the 7th.

In the opener, starting righthander Brian Love did a nice job in the first four innings before the Crusaders knocked him out in the 5th with a four-run inning when he lost his arm.

Mulvane's lone run came in the 7th when Boyer singled and scored when catcher Jeremiah Webb produced an RBI single. Kyle McGuire walked but the final two batters fanned to end the game.

"We just need to keep plugging away," said Katzenmeier. "We're at the point in the season when we want to play people who are better than we are and hopefully by the end of the season, it's going to pay off for us in the regional. I do know our hitting needs to improve. I don't know how many strikeouts they had but we watched a lot of third strikes. We weren't very disciplined at the plate. We helped their pitchers look better than they were by swinging at bad pitches."

After seven game at home, the Cats hit the road today (April 27) for two games at Maize. The Eagles are leading the Chisholm Trail League Division I. The doubleheader is scheduled to begin at 4 p.m.