

Sweep Crusaders

Making Plays Earns Mulvane First Victory

The difference between winning and losing? Making plays.

The Mulvane High School baseball team swept a doubleheader from Wellington Monday night, April 9, and they did it by making plays.

"We played the game," said MHS Coach Ramon Wiseman. "We hit-and-ran, we bunted. We got our leadoff people on and played the game, and that caused some problems for Wellington because they couldn't handle our speed. We put a lot of pressure on them and just pecked away at them."

The Wildcats won the first game, 5-4, then smashed a season-high 15 hits and pulled away in the nightcap for an 11-7 triumph. The sweep enabled the Cats to snap a four-game losing streak and gave first-year coach, Ramon Wiseman, his first varsity victories. Mulvane is 2-4 for the season.

"I had a really good time because we were playing the game that we can play," said Wiseman. "Austin Higinbotham looked good on the mound in the first game and our hitters came alive in the second game."

Mulvane took the lead in a see-saw game in the opener by scoring twice in the 5th inning to make it 5-3 and Higinbotham did the rest. He finished with a fine seven-hit victory and survived solo homers by Wellington players in the 4th and 5th innings because he walked only three batters. Higinbotham finished with six strikeouts.

Gary Trione started Mulvane's rally to the top in the 3rd inning with a one-out single and scored on a sacrifice by Derek Nordquist. Sonny Creekmore had also had a sacrifice but was able to reach first on a Crusader miscue. He scored moments later when he stole home.

Matt Heersche's single brought in Ryan Tatum, who had doubled in the 4th and the eventual winning run was plated in the 5th when Creekmore and Nordquist both singled and Kyle McGuire had an RBI double followed by an RBI single by Brian Love.

The Wildcats put game No. 2 away with six runs in their last two at-bats. Singles by McGuire, Ryan McKnight and Tatum brought home two runs in the 5th and Nordquist, McGuire and Love had singles and scored runs in the 6th. McKnight also had a single and scored when Jake Myers cracked a double.

"Our hitting won the second game for us but bunting won the first game," said Wiseman. "We put down some great bunts. The kids started hammering the ball in game No. 2. It was our best hitting game of the year."

In the nightcap, McGuire was the hitting ringleader, banging four singles and scoring three runs. Jake Myers and Tatum finished with two hits and McKnight went 3-for-4 with three runs scored.

"Better" is good but it still wasn't good enough to give the MHS Cats a baseball victory Thursday, April 5, in their home opener. Goddard proved to have the guns to send Mulvane to 13-3 and 8-2 setbacks at the Mulvane sports complex.

That left Coach Wiseman's troops at 0-4 for the year.

"We played better than we did the first week of the season but in both games, we let one inning kill us," explained Wiseman. "There was always some slip-up, a walk or an error, in those innings that started the Goddard offense up and it kept building. Other than those two big innings, I thought we played some really good ball."

The Lions, the defending Chisholm Trail League champions, made things happen in the 3rd inning when they broke the game open against Cat starter Jake Myers, knocking him off the mound. They turned a 4-2 game into a 12-2 runaway with an eight-run inning.

Mulvane had a couple of opportunities, though. Ryan Tatum walked and Rogers singled in the 4th but the rally started with two out and fizzled right there. In the 5th, Austin Higinbotham tripled into the gap in right-centerfield and scored when Kyle McGuire singled, but that's where the rally stopped.

Earlier, Derek Nordquist's triple and a double by McGuire in the first inning had given the Cats a good start. Mulvane's other run came in the second when Jake Myers doubled and scored when Tatum singled.

In the second game, solid pitching by Brian Love and Higinbotham kept the Cats close. Again, it was a big inning that propelled the Lions to the sweep. Goddard broke up a 0-0 game with five in the 4th. Higinbotham came in for Love in the 6th and pitched scoreless ball.

Mulvane's only scoring came in the 4th also. Higinbotham lifted a double to left and

scored when McGuire slashed a single up the middle. McGuire went to third on a base hit by Love. Jake Myers walked, loading the bases, and it looked like Mulvane had an inning going since there were no outs, but Tatum's grounder scored McGuire and the

last two hitters failed to produce.

The Wildcat baseballers will play their third straight home series tonight (April 12) when Rose Hill's Rockets come to town for a doubleheader. The first game is slated to begin at 4 p.m.

FIRST GAME

Wellington 001 111 0-4 7
Mulvane 002 120 x-5 8
Viranontes and Alex Hadorn; Austin Higinbotham and Ryan Tatum.

HR--Pat Ybarra, Ryan Elder (W).

SECOND GAME

Wellington 112 012 0-7 9
Mulvane 320 024 x-11 15
Brownlee, Alex Hadorn 6, and Hadorn; Pat Myers, Jon Rogers 5, and Ryan Tatum.

FIRST GAME

Goddard 318 10-13 8
Mulvane 110 01-3 8
Touchatt and Costello; Jake Myers, Jon Rogers 3, Pat Myers 5, and Eric Tatum.

HR--Riggan (G), grand slam.

SECOND GAME

Goddard 000 503 0-8 8
Mulvane 000 200 0-2 4
Mock and Costello; Brian Love, Austin Higinbotham 7, and Eric Tatum.