

## No-Hitter And 8 Straight

# Baseballers Stay On 'Tear'

For six innings, Mulvane High School baseball coach Ramon Wiseman wasn't nervous a bit. Once he found out Wildcat pitcher Austin Higinbotham had a no-hitter going Saturday, April 14, at Oxford, he couldn't sit still. He was a nervous wreck.

Luckily, Higinbotham wasn't. He coolly dispatched Oxford's Wildcats in a 10-0 victory without giving up a base hit. In the nightcap Saturday, Pat Myers tossed a two-hitter and MHS rallied for three runs in the top of the last inning for a 5-2 triumph, giving Mulvane six consecutive victories.

"Austin's game was pretty amazing," said Wiseman. "He threw a great game. The crazy thing is that I didn't even know it was a no-hitter until the last inning. If I would have known, I would have been a mess. I knew he had a great game going and there hadn't been many base runners. Coach (Morgan) LeClair knew it but it was kind of nobody wanted to talk about it for fear of jinxing things."

The only "jinxing" going on, though,

was when Higinbotham was on the hill. He issued only two walks and struck out a school record 19 batters. The old record was 16 "k's" by Coach LeClair in 1987 against Circle and Robert Turner notched 15 strikeouts in a 1982 Regional game against Burden.

"Austin had good command of his pitches and he was keeping them all down low," noted Wiseman. "In the second game, Pat was right there, too. He had a fine performance. If Austin wouldn't have thrown the no-hitter, we would have been sitting here talking about Pat's two-hitter instead."

The Wildcats started the opener with a bang, scoring four times in the first inning. Eventually, Mulvane finished by roughing up Oxford's pitcher for 14 hits.

In the first, Derek Nordquist started things with a single. Higinbotham singled and Brian Love's sacrifice scored one. Kyle McGuire lashed a single down the line in leftfield for another run and Jake Myers plated the last two runs with a double to right.

Myers had a tougher time in the second game. Mulvane scored single runs in the 1st and 2nd innings and Oxford tied it up, 2-2, with runs in the 4th and 6th before the Wildcats broke out in the 7th with three more runs to win the ball non-league game.

That winning rally was ignited by a base hit by Matt Heersche and a sacrifice by Gary Trione. Nordquist busted a single for one run and Higinbotham plated Nordquist after he stole second with a base hit. An error moved Higinbotham over and Love drove him in with a sacrifice.

The Cats started the week with a pair of heart-thumping, one-run victories over Rose Hill after taking big leads in both games. Mulvane held on for an 8-7 verdict in the first game Thursday, April 12, at the Mulvane sports complex. And the Cats really had to hold on in the second game after taking a 12-2 lead after three as RH rallied to make it close in a 12-11 contest.

"Both games were really good ball games," said Wiseman. "We were able to get two good stops from Jon Rogers, one in each game. But I have to take part of the blame in the second game by taking a chance on Nordquist stealing 3rd base. We had a big lead and were going for more but I had Derek going on a pitch and Austin hit it on a rope and they were able to double Derek off second base. That kind of took the wind out of our sails and gave them some momentum."

The Wildcats scored four times in the 4th inning to take a 6-3 lead in the opener. "We took advantage of a couple of errors and had some hits and steals after they tried to pick a runner off 1st base and it didn't work," said Wiseman. Love started the rally by reaching on an error. Matt Heersche walked with one out and Sonny Creekmore followed with a single. Two more runs scored when Higinbotham singled and Jake Myers followed with another RBI single.

But the winning runs were plated in the 5th after the Rockets had scored three times to tie it at 6-6. Ryan Tatum reached base when he was hit by a pitch to start the rally. He scored when Love tripled, and Love scored when Ryan McKnight belted a single.

Rogers did his job, closing off the Rockets with only one run in the last two innings in relief of Jake Myers.

Rogers did it again in game No. 2, blanking Rose Hill in the final frame, although the Rockets had three baserunners in the inning.

The Wildcat offense consisted of 11 hits, six of them for extra bases. Higinbotham's bat was hot as he went 3-for-4 with three runs scored and one RBI. Kyle McGuire knocked in four runs by going 2-for-4 with three runs scored. Love also scored three times and had two RBIs. And both Nordquist and McKnight had two hits and each scored a run.

The Cats appeared to have this one wrapped up early after a five-run 1st inning and three more runs plated in the 2nd for an

8-0 lead. Mulvane started the game with a triple by Nordquist and consecutive doubles by Higinbotham, McGuire and Love before McKnight singled. After an out, Jake Myers slapped a double to right for the final run.

Mulvane continued on its upswing Monday, April 16, with a doubleheader sweep at Clearwater. The Cats beat the Indians, 10-2, and 13-5, behind a pair of two-hit games by Jake Myers and Love.

That improved the MHS win skein to eight games in a row after starting the season at 0-4.

The Mulvane offense continued its best imitation of "hot bat night" as the Cats blasted 10 hits in support of Jake Myers, who walked only one and fanned three before being relieved by Nordquist in the 7th inning.

Nordquist led the hit parade for Mulvane, banging three hits and scoring three times. Sonny Creekmore had two hits and two RBIs and scored twice. Higinbotham and McKnight swatted two hits apiece and Love knocked in three runs and scored twice.

Mulvane salted the game away by scoring four times in the 5th inning to run a 3-0 lead into a 7-0 spread as Wiseman's troopers coasted to the finish line.

In the nightcap, Love throttled the Indians on only two hits but his struggle with control kept Clearwater in the game until an eight-run 7th inning put the outcome out of sight. Love walked 11 batters and hit two more.

The Cats combined for 13 hits with Kyle McGuire enjoying a 3-for-4 game with two runs scored and three RBIs. Higinbotham knocked in four runs and had a 2-for-3 game. Trione went 2-for-2, scored three times and had one RBI and Matt Heersche knocked in two runs and scored one as he had a 1-for-3 showing.

The Wildcats travel to Buhler today (April 19) for their next Chisholm Trail League series. The first of two games begins at 4 p.m.

### FIRST GAME

Mulvane	021 041 2--10 11
Clearwater	001 000 1--2 2
Jake Myers, Derek Nordquist 7, and Ryan Tatum; Peck and Gerberding.	

### SECOND GAME

Mulvane	002 030 8--13 13
Clearwater	121 100 0--5 2
Brian Love and Ryan Tatum; Wright and Gerberding.	

### FIRST GAME

Mulvane	401 001 4--10 14
Oxford	000 000 0--0 0
Austin Higinbotham and Ryan Tatum; Parsons and Bartleson.	

### SECOND GAME

Mulvane	110 000 3--5 6
Oxford	000 101 0--2 2
Pat Myers and Ryan Tatum; Bartleson, Comejo 5, and Comejo, Bartleson 5.	

### FIRST GAME

Rose Hill	102 031 0--7 7
Mulvane	101 420 x--8 9
Shawn Vernia and John Ed Cook; Jake Myers, Jon Rogers 5, and Ryan Tatum.	

### SECOND GAME

Rose Hill	002 306 0--11 9
Mulvane	534 000 x--12 11
Kyle Stearns and John Ed Cook; Brian Love, Jon Reed 6, Jon Rogers 6, and Ryan Tatum.	



Coach Ramon Wiseman holds up Brian Love at 3rd base against Rose Hill