

Wildcat BB Charge Cut Short; MHS Home But Not For State

Irony is often misunderstood and always better when it concerns the other guy. Well, there was plenty of irony to go around for the Mulvane High School baseball Wildcats Wednesday, May 16, in the final rounds of the Wellington Class 4A Regional Baseball Tournament at Hibbs-Hooten Field.

The Wildcats were knocked out in the championship after surviving a semifinal game earlier Wednesday.

Now get this. The Wildcats looked pretty sorry less than 10 days earlier in two games against Augusta. The Orioles drubbed the Cats, 6-1, and 7-0. So who do you think won the semifinal game when the Cats and Orioles tangled once again?

Wrong! Mulvane simply blew Augusta out of the tub in a 13-hit, 13-8, game.

Okay, another test. Earlier this year, the Wildcats had Wellington in Mulvane for two games and the Cats mopped up the place with the Crusaders by sweeping the series, 5-4 and 11-7, for their first two victories of the campaign. So when the two teams met again with a trip to the Class 4A State Baseball Championship in Mulvane on the line, who do you think will be showing their stuff on the Mulvane sports complex this weekend?

Wrong again. Wellington scored early and often Wednesday in the title game and walked to a 12-1 victory for the Regional championship.

Kind of ironic, isn't it?

"It's certainly an ironic twist of fate," agreed Ramon Wiseman, the first-year MHS coach. "We were never in the ball game against Wellington. They were knocking the heck out of the ball the whole game and we just couldn't contain them."

The defeat ended the year for the Wildcats at 9-12 and Wellington advanced to Mulvane's "playground" for the No. 7 seed in the State tourney, which opens Friday, May 25. The Crusaders (12-11) will play Marysville, No. 2 seeded, in the last game of the first day at 6:30 p.m.

It was no contest, really. The Wildcats had only two hits—Derek Nordquist's lead-off homer in the 3rd inning and a double by Sonny Creekmore in the 5th inning. Mulvane had only five baserunners. "When we played them earlier, they weren't hitting like that," said Wiseman. "We also played

Wellington Class 4A

Regional Results

CHAMPIONSHIP

Mulvane	001 00—1 2
Wellington	230 7x—12 12

Brian Love, Jon Rogers 2, Jon Reed 4, and Ryan Tatum; Mike Vigamontes and Alex Hadorn.
HR—Derek Nordquist (M); Joe Caudillo, Gerry Murphy (W).

SEMIFINALS

Mulvane	301 033 3—13 8
Augusta	101 006 0—8 8

Pat Myers, Jon Rogers 6, and Ryan Tatum; Maier, Robert Chavana, and Spacht
HR—Kyle McGuire (M).

Wellington 18, Clearwater 7

two pretty good ball games and our staff did a good job on them. But Wednesday, we threw three or four guys at them and they hit every one of them."

Wiseman said he didn't understand why but there were parallels in the two games. "It was kind of weird," said the Cat coach. "Against Augusta the first time, we seemed almost helpless against their pitchers. Against Wellington the first time, they seemed helpless with our pitchers but that all reversed in the regional. I think one of the big things was that our pitchers didn't change speeds to keep them off-balance. You keep throwing fastballs all night and anybody's going to start catching up with you."

The key inning was the first one against Wellington. The Crusaders scored and Mulvane only acted like it wanted to score.

After two outs, Brian Love walked and so did Kyle McGuire but catcher Ryan Tatum grounded out ending the only threat of the game basically. Nordquist's smack started the 3rd inning but the next three batters went down meekly.

It was a different story earlier in the day. The Wildcats teed off with three runs in the opening inning against Augusta. That's two more runs than they got in 14 innings about 10 days earlier.

"I think the kids felt like they were the under dogs going into that game and they were on top of their game," emphasized Wiseman. "Pat Myers started on the mound for us and he did a fine job, and the rest of the team just hung in there and did the things that made Augusta make plays and they didn't do it."

On the contrary. The Orioles had nine miscues that helped Mulvane into the next level. "They also hit us about five times and we put down five bunts," said Wiseman. "That's what I mean about making them play the game. We forced them to make plays and they didn't do it. Those errors helped us a great deal, but we put the pressure on them with our bunting game and our running game. It was a momentum thing and we had the momentum from the opening inning."

Nordquist started the game by getting hit by a pitch and stole 2nd. After Austin Higinbotham walked, Kyle McGuire lifted a three-run homer. He finished the night with five RBIs.

Higinbotham walked, stole 2nd, went to 3rd on a passed ball and scored on McGuire's base hit in the 3rd and Mulvane iced the game with back-to-back three-run frames in the 5th and 6th. Hits by Love, McGuire, Matt Heersche, Pat Myers and Creekmore made it 7-3 and the Cats made it 10-2 with three more in the 6th with singles by McGuire and Tatum doing most of the damage.

Higinbotham finished with a 1-for-3 night and four runs scored and McGuire went 5-for-5, scoring three times. Creekmore and Tatum had two hits each and Nordquist scored twice.

Pat Myers went five innings before giving way to reliever Jon Rogers, who mopped up by working out of jams in both the 6th and 7th innings with only one run scored. Myers gave up four hits but walked four during his stint.

But just knowing it was an ironic twist of fate won't make it easier to watch Wellington playing at the sports complex Friday and knowing it could be you.

"We wanted to get there so we could play at home in the state tournament, but it didn't happen," said Wiseman.

Mulvane Class 4A

Regional Results

(At Mulvane sports complex)

CHAMPIONSHIP

Rose Hill 5, Clearwater 1

SEMIFINALS

Rose Hill 3, Augusta 0

Clearwater 6, Douglass 1