

Stunning RH Rally Leaves Wildcats Limp



Mulvane came within eyelash of putting the "king" to rest, but the veteran club that has been through the wars pulled it out.

The Wildcat softballers nearly pulled the plug on defending 4A state champion Rose Hill but let the Rockets squirm off to another state meet Tuesday, May 17, in a thrilling climax to the Mulvane Class 4A Regional Softball Tournament at Mulvane sports complex.

Rose Hill scored three times in the final inning with two out to edge the Cats, 7-6, in as thrilling a championship softball game as you'll ever want to see to win the regional title and advance to the 4A State Softball Tournament at Manhattan next May 27-28.

"It was a great ball game, but it just boiled down to their experience and our inexperience," said MHS coach Charlie Mason. "They've been through the wars. You can't be state champs and not be in those kinds of situations.

"I can't say enough about how well we played. We were getting no-hit and could have easily given up in the seventh, but we came back. The way Susan (Wenger) was pitching, I could just taste it with two outs in the seventh inning."

Mulvane didn't get a hit off RH ace Brandi Nickell until the last inning when they scored six times to take a 6-4 lead. Rose Hill regained its composure, however, and scored three times to win it.

Mulvane wiped out a 4-0 RH lead when Heather Taylor walked and Shannon Reed singled. Marianne Smysor walked to fill the bases before Janelle Wenke walked to force in one run. Two runs scored when Lee Cates singled and after NiChelle Bruce walked, three

more scored on an error and a passed ball.

The freshman Wenger, however, couldn't hold on against the seasoned state champs. Five walks, one hit and a costly error enabled the Rockets to rally.

Both teams advance to the championship game handily, Mulvane winning its first-ever regional game, 8-0, over Bluestem, and the Rockets burying Wellington, 15-0.

In that game, Heather Pearman and Smysor had two hits apiece and Bruce, Taylor and Reed each scored twice to back up the stellar mound work by freshman Jamie Wilson, who fired a one-hit shutout.

The Cats ended their season at 10-12.

The Wildcats closed out their regular season Thursday, May 12, with a couple good games against Circle. The Wildcats had a comeback win in the opener, 5-4, then muscled up for 10 hits in the nightcap behind good pitching by Susan Wenger for a 10-4 winner. Both games were played at the Mulvane sports complex.

That left Coach Mason's girls at 9-11 for the season and some momentum as they headed into the regionals.

"They were big wins for the program as well as for the league race," said Mason. "I think that put is solidly in seventh place."

More importantly, the opening comeback wiped out the sour memory of several games earlier this year which saw the Cats unable to hang on in the last inning.

The Wildcats trailed, 4-2, going into the last inning but Gemi Spatz started a rally with a base hit. She stole second and after an out, Stephanie Schultz reached on an

Mulvane 4A Regional Softball Tournament

CHAMPIONSHIP

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Mulvane | 000 000 6—6 2 |
| Rose Hill | 200 011 3—7 6 |
| Susan Wenger, Jamie Wilson 7, and NiChelle Bruce; Brandi Nickell and Mandy Scantlin. | |

SEMIFINALS

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Mulvane | 010 124 0—8 11 |
| Bluestem | 000 000 0—0 1 |
| Jamie Wilson and NiChelle Bruce; Traci Hall and Linda Gomez, Nicole Forsythe. | |

...
Rose Hill 15, Wellington 0

error, scoring Spatz. Schultz toured the bases on a stolen base and a wild pitch before coming in on in when Shannon Reed reached on an error. That tied the game, and Brooke Hansen ended it when she belted a double, which scored Reed and making a winner out of freshman Jamie Wilson, who gave up only two hits.

Mulvane's first two runs came in the second when Marianne Smysor and Hansen both reached on errors and NiChelle Bruce drilled a two-out single, scoring both girls.

In the nightcap, Mulvane gave Wenger plenty of support, jumping out to a 7-0 lead before the Thunderbirds got on the scoreboard. Wenger finished by scattering nine hits and walking only two.

The Cats scored five times in the third when Smysor reached on an error and scored on Lee Cates' base knock. Spatz knocked in Cates with a single and both Heather Taylor and Schultz followed with RBI singles. Hansen ended the rally when she plated Schultz with a run-scoring base hit.

Spatz, Taylor, Schultz and Cates each had two hits and Smysor, Cates and Spatz scored two runs apiece.

Chisholm Trail League Final Softball Standings

(Includes all games played)

| Team | W | L |
|---------------|----|----|
| x-Maize | 18 | 2 |
| Valley Center | 15 | 5 |
| Rose Hill | 14 | 6 |
| Goddard | 12 | 7 |
| Augusta | 10 | 10 |
| Andover | 10 | 10 |
| Mulvane | 9 | 11 |
| Wellington | 5 | 15 |
| Circle | 2 | 18 |
| Douglas | 1 | 18 |

x—won CTL championship

FIRST GAME

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Circle | 020 200 0—4 2 |
| Mulvane | 020 000 3—5 4 |
| Darnell and Arnold; Jamie Wilson and NiChelle Bruce. | |

SECOND GAME

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Circle | 000 020 2—4 9 |
| Mulvane | 005 230 x—10 10 |
| Boehm and Arnold; Susan Wenger and NiChelle Bruce. | |