

Softballers 'On Heels'

Batters Go Silent; Defense Goes South

The bats went silent and the gloves clanged...it's supposed to be the other way around.

Nothing worked right for the Mulvane High School softball girls during the last week's action. After cruising through their first six games, the Wildcats saw their losing slide go to six games with the loss of two doubleheaders. Mulvane was pounded by Rose Hill, 10-0 and 17-4, in a series here Thursday, April 20, and two nights earlier at Goddard, the Lions took advantage of leaky defense to clip the Cats, 7-6 and 12-10.

"We had hoped to split those two series' but we didn't play well," admitted MHS softball chief Charlie Mason, whose team slipped to 6-6 for the season. "We couldn't get Rose Hill's pitcher out and we didn't make the plays we needed at Goddard. That sums it up pretty good."

The Rose Hill set was moved to the Mulvane sports complex because of wet grounds in Rose Hill but that didn't give the Wildcats the home field advantage as RH jumped on top, 7-0, after only two innings against Mulvane starter Jamie Wilson. In all fairness, though, the defense slipped and so did Mulvane's bats, managing only two hits in the shutout loss. Not only couldn't Mulvane solve the Rocket hurler Wendi Howard at the plate, they couldn't solve her bat, either.

"Their pitcher had six or seven hits and about eight RBIs," said Mason. "Rose Hill had quite a few hits. Going into our series, they hadn't hit the ball like that this year, but they did it that day and that's what counts."

Mulvane's only hits came when Janelle

Wenke bagged a single in the second and when catcher NiChelle Bruce lined a double in the third.

Mulvane's offense picked up in the nightcap but it wasn't enough to offset a five-error game, including four by Mulvane in a nine-run second inning that blew the doors off the second game early.

Mulvane's four runs were plated in the third. Shannon Reed singled and Wenke's grounder forced Reed at second. Laura Butler singled for one run and Gemi Spatz reached on an error to score another run. Heather Taylor also reached on an infield error and both scored when Bruce singled to leftfield.

"We're back on our heels now and nothing's happening on offense or on defense," stressed Mason. "We have to become aggressive again like we were earlier in the year. The last six games have been against the top three teams in the league. I guess the only bright spot is that we're 6-6 after the first 12 games, so that's okay."

At Goddard Tuesday, April 18, it was pretty disappointing. Unlike the Rose Hill games where the Rockets really put the games out of reach, the Wildcats could have won both contests at Goddard.

"They could have gone either way," said Mason. "We were in both games and it got down to whether we came a play or not, and we didn't make it."

Goddard won the first game in the bottom of the last inning when the Lions punched in an unearned run after an error.

Mulvane got two hits from Bruce, Lee Cates and Valerie Larson and Wenke and Reed had scored two runs apiece before Goddard's late rally to win against Wilson.

In the second game, the Lions rallied with seven runs in the fourth and fifth innings to take a 11-6 lead. Mulvane came back with three in the sixth when Wenke singled, Courtney Renfro reached on a fielder's choice, Crissy Carpenter walked and Spatz doubled to deliver two runs. Spatz later scored on a ground out.

In the seventh, Reed' singled and scored when Renfro singled but that was all the damage the Cat batters could do.

Mason's troopers will be at Wellington today (April 27) for a doubleheader before entertaining Valley Center here in two games Monday, May 1. Both twinbills begin at 4:30 p.m.

FIRST GAME

Mulvane	000 00	0	2
Rose Hill	340 03	10	8
Jamie Wilson and NiChelle Bruce, Wendi Howard and Jill Graham			

SECOND GAME

Mulvane	004 00	4	5
Rose Hill	293 3x	17	15
Susan Wenger and NiChelle Bruce, Wendi Howard and Jill Graham			

HR - Sarah Anthis (RH), 2

FIRST GAME

Mulvane	120 120 0	6	8
Goddard	320 001	7	7
Jamie Wilson and NiChelle Bruce, Hackenberg and Brown			

SECOND GAME

Mulvane	104 103 1	10	10
Goddard	202 341 x	12	11
Susan Wenger and NiChelle Bruce, Latta and Bennett			