

Softballers Bust Streak; Hoping To Catch Fire

The Mulvane High School softball girls haven't been pulling many tricks out of their duffel bags lately but Coach Charlie Mason hopes the current malaise disappears...where's David Copperfield when you need him?

Valley Center kept Mulvane from feeling good about itself Monday, May 1, by dumping the Cats on May Day, 16-0 and 10-3, running the MHS record to 7-9 heading into the final two match-ups of the regular season.

Mulvane did snap a six-game skid at Wellington Thursday, April 27, when the Wildcats ran up three runs in the first extra inning and held on for a 9-7 victory in the doubleheader opener against the Crusaders, but Wellington rebounded in the nightcap with a 15-5 winner.

"We need to get things back together and get ready for our next two doubleheaders, they are our biggest games of the year," said Mason. "We need to start looking at our seeding in the regional and we need to get a few wins."

The Wildcats will entertain Andover in a twinbill today (May 4) with the games starting at 4:30 p.m. at the Mulvane sports complex. Mulvane will finish its regular season Monday, May 8, on the road against Circle in a make-up doubleheader.

That will set the stage for the five-team Mulvane 4A Regional Tournament at the Mulvane sports complex May 15 and 17. As it appears now, Rose Hill will be the No. 1 seed.

The Wildcats showed they still have a spark in Monday's series against Valley in the second game after getting blown away in the opener. "The first game was a combination of things—all bad," said Mason. "You combine 10 walks with 11 hits and eight errors in one game and that makes it kind of tough to hang in there with anybody. Plus, their pitcher pitched a pretty good ball game. We got only one hit."

Mulvane looked like a different team in the second game, leading 3-2 going into the fifth inning before the roof caved in. The Cats scored three times in the first inning when Gemi Spatz singled with one out, scoring on Heather Taylor's base rap. Lee Cates followed with a single before Valerie

FIRST GAME

Valley Center	106 81—16 11
Mulvane	000 00—0 1

Fichhage and Hansen; Jamie Wilson and Lee Cates.

SECOND GAME

Valley Center	200 050 3—10 5
Mulvane	300 000 0—3 10

Lee and Hansen; Susan Wenger and Gemi Spatz.

FIRST GAME

Mulvane	010 220 13—9 15
Wellington	101 301 01—7 11

Susan Wenger and NiChelle Bruce; Strothman and Yunker

SECOND GAME

Mulvane	500 00—5 7
Wellington	420 72—15 14

Jamie Wilson, Susan Wenger 4, and NiChelle Bruce; Strothman and Yunker.

MULVANE Sports

Larson's base hit made it 2-0. Shannon Reed reached on an error and Courtney Renfro singled for the third run of the rally.

The Hornets took the lead in the fifth with five tallies, bunching four of their five hits in the game in that inning, then wrapped it up with three more in the seventh against Mulvane righthander Susan Wenger.

Mulvane tried to rally in the sixth inning when Reed and Renfro both singled but a doubleplay by VC put a damper on the frame. Laura Butler, Cates and Renfro each had two hits in the game.

The Cat offense was a disappearing act in the opening game. The only Mulvane hit was a single by Crissy Carpenter in the fourth inning and she was forced at second as no Mulvane runners went past second base.

"We played much better in the second ball game," admitted Mason. "We could have won the game but then we started putting them on base. They got some big hits in there, too. Anytime you throw in a couple errors or walks against a good team, you're going to have trouble and we did. That was the difference in the game. You can't five good people four and five outs in an inning. If you do, it'll come back to bite you."

The MHS girls snapped out of the doldrums at Wellington Thursday, scoring three times in the first extra inning for their first win in nearly three weeks. Butler walked to start the inning and so did catcher NiChelle Bruce. Spatz delivered with an RBI single and after Taylor sacrificed the runners over for the first out, Larson banged a single for another run. Cates did the same and it was enough to allow Mulvane to hang on behind Wenger, who gave up an unearned run and survived an error in the bottom of the eighth to win it.

The Wildcats tied the see-saw game with a run in the top of the seventh when Reed slapped a double and scored when Janelle Wenke's single was then mishandled by the Crusader rightfielder, allowing her to score. That tied the game at 6-6.

Mulvane's offense looked good in game No. 1 as Mason's crew bagged 15 hits. Larson had the team's first three-hit game of the year and she scored twice. Wenke, Butler, Spatz and Bruce had two hits each.

Mulvane went on a tear in the first inning of the second game, rolling out to a 5-0 lead but Wellington scored the next 15 runs to end the game after five.