

Mulvane, Wellington Split

Cat Pitching Shines Early

If the hitting ever catches up, the Mulvane High School softball girls could be, well, in a class of their own.

The Cat pitching sparkled once again Monday, April 12, when Wellington came to town for a Chisholm Trail League series, but the Mulvane hitting still appeared to be high-centered. That caused a split with Wellington edging the Wildcats, 5-3, in the opener and Mulvane coming back for a solid 6-2 triumph in the nightcap.

The split left Mulvane at 5-3 overall and

3-3 in the CTL.

"Defensively, we played okay and our pitching was once again great but we didn't play good softball in those two games," admitted Coach Charlie Mason. "That's two games in a row that Kassie (Hargrove) has deserved a better fate. Right now, our big problem is offensively. We're not aggressive enough at the plate. Wellington's pitcher did a really good job, and she kept us off stride all night."

Mulvane fell behind early when the vis-

iting Crusaders took advantage of two Hargrove walks, two hits and an error to grab a 2-0 lead in the first inning. After that, they held Wellington to only three hits and one walk. But the Cat offense couldn't hit stride. Mulvane was hitless until Lindsay Kendrick started a promising skirmish in the 7th inning with a one-out single. She stole second but Danielle Vanderhoof grounded out. Shelley Richards reached on an error, scoring Kendrick, and Aubrey Benjamin walked but that was the extent of the rally.

"We hit the ball but we hit it right at people," added Mason. "They made the plays. We had seven innings to make up those runs but we couldn't do it. We're just struggling offensively right now."

In the nightcap, Mulvane veteran Shelley Richards was in control, facing only 16 batters in the first five innings. She ended up with a three-hit, no walk effort to boost her record to 3-1.

The Wildcats struggled for three innings before scoring once in the 4th when Kendrick walked and stole second. She scored when Hargrove singled. Mulvane made it 6-0 in the 5th when the bats started to heat up. Sabrina Foy singled and Ashley Wirths walked. Jackie McColpin singled in one run and another scored on Jessica Sheridan's ground out. Kendrick ripped an RBI single. Another run scored on Richards' infield grounder and the final run scored when Danielle Vanderhoof ripped a single.

"We put some hits together but it took us a while," said Mason. "Our girls just need to swing with more authority and drive the ball somewhere. I still believe it will all come together."

The Cats also split two league games against Goddard Thursday, April 8, at the Mulvane sports complex. Goddard won the first game by a 5-3 count but the Wildcats came back in the second game behind another stellar job on the mound by Richards to salvage a 2-0 shutout.

"You'd like to feel good about a split with Goddard, but we gave them three unearned runs," said Mason. "We came away from that game knowing we should have won both of those games. It's the same feeling I get thinking about the Wellington game. There's not much difference there in being 5-3 or 7-1."

Once again, Mulvane's offense went dead with Hargrove on the rubber. MHS had only three hits through the first five innings but the hosts actually had a 1-1 tie going when the Lions took advantage of three errors and one walk to jump ahead, 5-1, in the sixth. The Wildcats scored one time in the 6th, Kendrick singling and scoring on Vanderhoof's double.

Things were promising in the last inning,

FIRST GAME

Wellington	200 000 0-2	5
Mulvane	000 000 1-1	1
Hollie Meeker and Sandell, Kassie Hargrove and Shelley Richards		

SECOND GAME

Wellington	000 002-2	3
Mulvane	000 150-6	7
Hollie Meeker and Sandell, Shelley Richards and Danielle Vanderhoof		

FIRST GAME

Goddard	100 004 0-5	6
Mulvane	001 001 1-3	7
Rising and Phillips; Kassie Hargrove and Shelley Richards		

SECOND GAME

Goddard	000 000 0-0	3
Mulvane	100 100 x-2	4
Bennett and Phillips; Shelley Richards and Danielle Vanderhoof		

Junior Varsity Softball

Mulvane 14-8, Goddard 3-7
 Mulvane 9-6, Medicine Lodge 3-0
 Mulvane 11-0, Valley Center 6-4

too, when Rachael Hamer singled and so did Benjamin. McColpin ripped a single to score one run and but she was cut down at second base on a close play. It was a big play, too, since it was the second out.

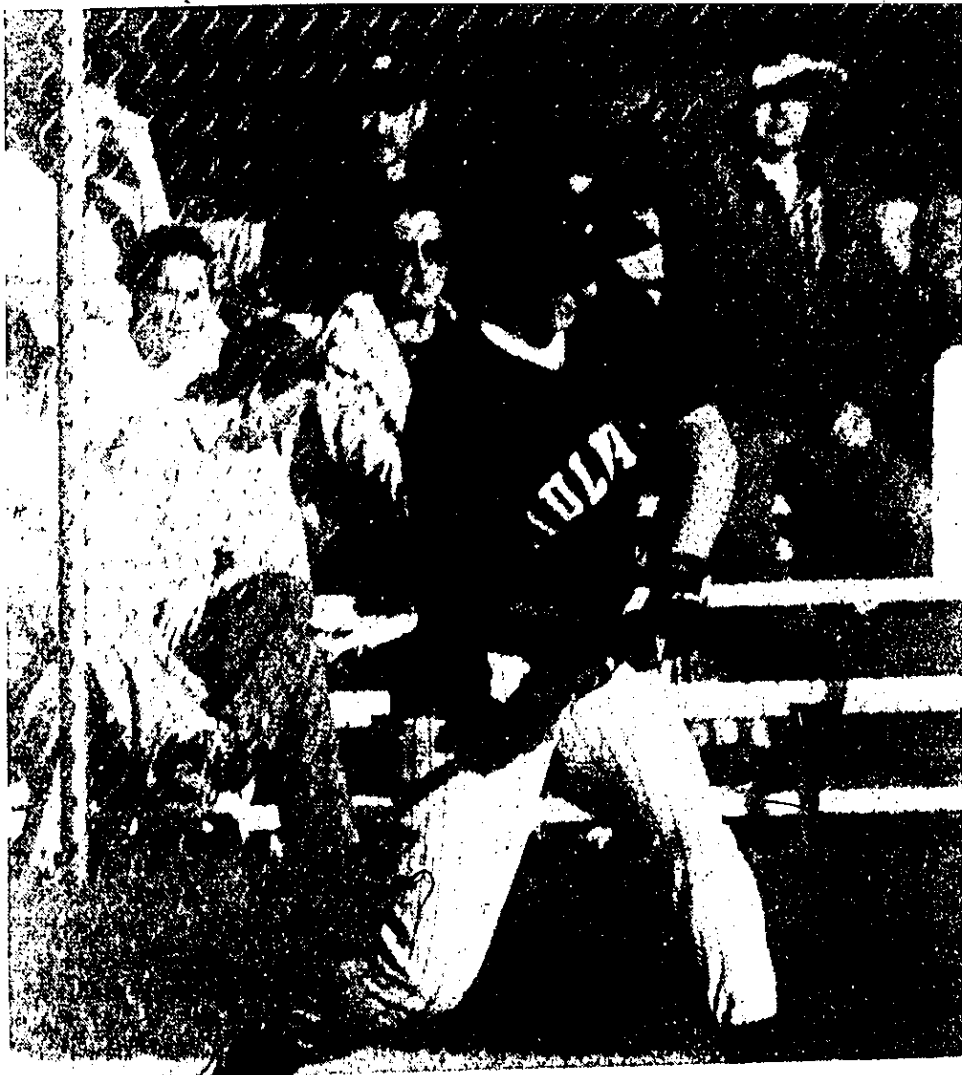
"We're just having to scratch and claw for everything we get," lamented Mason, "and that puts a lot of pressure on our pitchers."

The Wildcat JV team ran its record to 5-1 Thursday, April 8, at home against Goddard. The Cats trounced the Lions, 14-3, in the opener, then snuffed out a last-inning rally to preserve an 8-7 verdict in the nightcap.

In the first game, Stephanie Sanchez had three hits and scored three times to ignite an 11-hit attack. Stormi Eddy went 2-for-2 with three RBIs and Cristin Richards had two hits and three RBIs. In the second game, the Cats won it when they threw out the tying run at the plate in the last inning. Rightfielder Jinny Crain started the relay and threw to Josalyn Marksberry, who pegged the ball to catcher Amber Tillemans who tagged the runner out.

Mulvane's JVs beat Medicine Lodge in a pair of games Tuesday, 9-3 and 6-0. In the nightcap, Katie Rose tossed the shutout, allowing only three hits and striking out 12. Stacy Butts, Richards and Stormi Eddy had two hits apiece. In the first game, Mulvane took advantage of the Indians' staff, which dished out 15 walks. Marksberry had an RBI double in the 4th.

The jayvee softball team opened its season by splitting with Valley Center on the road. Mulvane won the first game, 11-6, but lost the second game, 4-0. In the opener, the Cats ripped 15 hits with Sanchez, Annie McCullough, Rose and Eddy each going 2-for-3. Natalie Turner and Marksberry also had two hits apiece and scored two. The bats went quiet in the second game and spoiled a fine pitching performance by Rose, who scattered eight hits. Amber Payne, Rose and Kris Lazar had hits for the Cats.



Mulvane hitter Jackie McColpin goes after a pitch against Goddard