

S-Ball Opening Battle Hits Snag; Hornets Sweep Two From MHS

The Mulvane High School softball openers turned into a "good, bad and ugly" situation for Coach Charlie Mason.

The Wildcats played "good" in the first game of the year Thursday, March 29, at Valley Center, but the "bad" thing is that the Cats lost that one by a 3-2 count. The "ugly" came into play in the final game when VC throttled the visiting Wildcats, 7-0.

"The first game was a great ball game," pointed out Mason. "You can't ask for anything more from Sara Simpson than what she gave us on the mound. She pitched a whale of a ball game. But the problem we had is that we didn't bunch our hits together to score runs. And in the second game, our defense didn't play very good ball behind Dani Phillips."

A timely hit here and there would have given the Wildcats a victory in the season opener and would have made Simpson's day. She gave up only one earned run, struck out five and didn't walk a batter as she seemed to regain the form she had as a freshman. "That was one of the questions we needed answering," said Mason. "She pitched well as a freshman but had arm trouble all of last year and slumped. She

FIRST GAME

Mulvane	001 100 0—2 6
Valley Center	002 100 x—3 4

Sara Simpson and Danielle Vanderhoof; Davis and Truman.

SECOND GAME

Mulvane	000 000 0—0 5
Valley Center	050 020 x—7 7

Dani Phillips and Danielle Vanderhoof; Fluker and Doty.

looks like she's back, though, this year."

Mulvane could have broken the game open twice but didn't when nobody could come up with the clutch hit. The Cats scored in the 3rd inning to take a 1-0 lead when Katie Rose singled and scored when Kayla Linnebur doubled but Simpson couldn't help her cause and left Linnebur stranded.

After the Hornets took a 2-1 lead in their half of the 3rd, Mulvane had its best chance. Melissa Doerfer led off with a walk, Danielle Vanderhoof reached on a throwing error by the Valley pitcher. Dani Phillips, trying to bunt the runners over with no outs, beat out the bunt to fill the sacks. Sherri Lasiter delivered with an RBI single but the bottom of the order went down without getting the ball out of the infield.

Mulvane had another chance to make

some noise in the 6th when Vanderhoof and Phillips singled and Lasiter sacrificed them over. After two outs, Josalyn Marksberry loaded the bases when she walked, but all three runners were stranded in Mulvane's last gasp offensively.

The second game was no fun to watch for Wildcat fans. Mulvane had five hits but left eight runners stranded behind Phillips, who gave up seven hits and was shelled for five runs in the 2nd inning. The defense also had four errors. Linnebur finished with a 2-for-4 effort and Doerfer, Vanderhoof and Phillips all had singles.

"Valley has great quickness and they force you to make the plays," said Mason. "Even when you make a clean play, you still have to hustle or they'll beat you to first. I was a little disappointed because I thought we should have split with them, but the good thing is that Valley already had two games under its belt. We did a lot of good things and now we just need to improve our game."

The Cats will be at home today (April 5) for a doubleheader against Goddard at 4:30 p.m. The Wildcats were scheduled to play at Oxford Tuesday, April 3. The results from that game will appear in next weeks' paper.