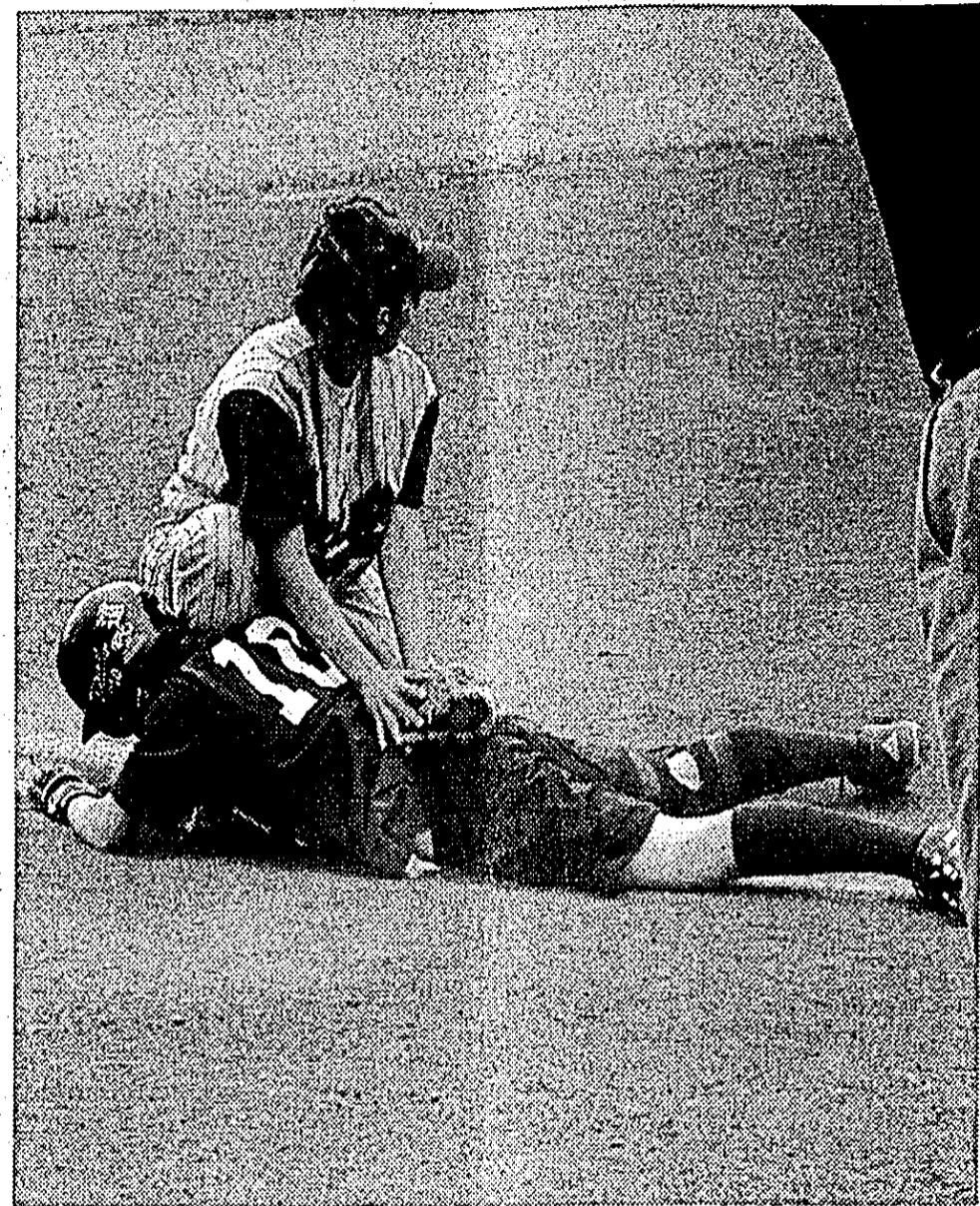


Mulvane Hitting Comes Alive Just In Time To Salvage Softball Split



Melissa Doerfer dives back to third base safely

If you can't beat them, join them. A hit-happy Clearwater team came into Mulvane Monday night, April 15, and it was just what the doctor ordered for the Wildcat hitting game. The Cats' offense came alive in the second game and lifted the Wildcats to a 9-4 victory over the Indians and a split of the doubleheader at the Mulvane sports complex.

In the first game, Clearwater slapped Cat ace Sara Simpson around to win by a 6-2 margin.

"Clearwater is a good hitting ball club and we were able to bounce back in that second game," said Mason. "We found ourselves in a hole early but we kept talking about hitting the ball hard and making them play it. Well, that finally came to pass and we started hitting the ball and they helped us with a couple errors."

The Cats finished with 10 hits in the nightcap, including six in a big, eight-run 5th inning that wiped out the Indian lead and put Mulvane in control.

The second game against the Indians was much more interesting for "Wildcat watchers." After Clearwater took a 4-0 lead, Mulvane scratched for a run in the 3rd when Clasen tripled and scored on Dani Phillips' base knock.

There was a major explosion in the 5th inning, however, and Mulvane put together six hits for eight runs to take charge. Phillips started the push when she reached on an error. Doerfer singles, Stephanie Tatum and Hannah Benven had RBI grounders, before Simpson blasted a two-run single. Pitcher Shayna Duncan singled and Rose doubled in two runs, then scored when Phillips walloped a base hit. Phillips scored moments later when Kayla Linnebur singled.

Duncan made a triumphant return to starter status after a back injury had slowed her down. She went the distance and scattered seven hits, striking out five.

Simpson has had to be getting used to pitching with no run tolerance level. In her four losses, the Wildcats have chalked up a grand total of three runs. The senior righthander has lost games 6-0, 2-1, 2-0 and 6-2. It would be kind of hard to top the one last year that lasted 17 innings against Rose Hill. Simpson pitched 16 innings of scoreless ball only to lose in the 17th, 4-0.

The Indians reached Simpson in the first for two runs and added runs in the 3rd, 4th and 5th to put the game away. Simpson had baserunners in every inning.

In the last inning, Ashley McKenzie reached on an infield error and so did Sara Clasen. Both scored when Simpson and Katie Rose had back-to-back singles.

The Wildcat softballers kept their record squared at 5-5 Thursday, April 11, when they split a pair of 2-0 games in Rose Hill. The Rockets took game No. 1 and Mulvane won the nightcap.

"I think we played our best defense this year in the two games over there," said Mason. "They had to earn their two runs and so did we. Anytime Rose Hill and Mulvane lock up, its going to be a pretty

good ball game and both these games were. In that first one, we just couldn't break through. We had a couple of base-running errors and we didn't get the key hit when we needed it. They put three hits together and scored a couple of runs, which is all they needed."

The opener spoiled another top-drawer effort by the senior righthander Simpson, who gave up eight hits and no hitting support from her teammates. She faced only 13 batters over the first four innings, one over the minimum. "She pitched well again, good enough to win but we didn't get her any runs," said Mason.

The Wildcats could have broken it open when they loaded the sacks in the 3rd with two outs. Sara Clasen reached on an error but was out when Candace Hufford reached. Melissa Doerfer walked and Stephanie Tatum singled but that was the end of the scoring attempt. Mulvane had two runners on in the 7th when back-to-back errors put Kayla Linnebur and Simpson on base but that rally also shriveled up.

Tatum had an excellent game in the nightcap, giving up only two hits before Shayna Duncan came in to spell her, giving up only one more hit.

The Wildcats scored both their runs in the 3rd. Clasen reached on a strange strike-out/dropped ball by the Rocket catcher. After a couple of outs, Dani Phillips ripped a single and both girls came home when Linnebur sent a fly sailing over the right-fielder's head for a triple.

"The second game was opposite the first one, we were the ones who got the timely hits," said Mason. "And playing good defense helped us maintain the lead. We made three adjustments with Hufford in rightfield and all three times, the ball was hit directly to where she was. We're getting great pitching. Now it's just a matter of getting some more hitting."

The Wildcats will try to do that today (April 18) when they host Buhler in a pair of games at the complex. The first game will start at 5:30 p.m. because of music competition involving several MHS players.

FIRST GAME

Clearwater	201 120 0-6 7
Mulvane	000 000 2-2 3

Love and Loger; Sara Simpson and Sara Clasen.

SECOND GAME

Clearwater	202 000 0-4 7
Mulvane	001 080 x-9 10

McMillen and Love; Shayna Duncan and Sara Clasen, Katelyn Carson 5.

FIRST GAME

Mulvane	000 000 0-0 1
Rose Hill	000 002 x-2 6

Sara Simpson and Sara Clasen; Amy Rose and Katie Hoyt.

SECOND GAME

Mulvane	002 000 0-2 2
Rose Hill	000 000 0-0 3

Stephanie Tatum, Shayna Duncan 4, and Sara Clasen; Ashley DeMoss and Katie Hoyt.

Junior Varsity Results

FIRST GAME

Clearwater	000 31-4 5
Mulvane	020 01-5 2

Mulvane battery: Morgan Stoll and Katelyn Carson.

SECOND GAME

Clearwater	000 03-3 4
Mulvane	020 2x-4 7

Mulvane battery: Morgan Stoll and Ashley McKenzie.