

Underdog Cats Nearly Land Spot



The underdog ruled Tuesday in Arkansas City.

The Mulvane High School softball girls came within one play of capping the season with an improbable trip to the Class 5A State Softball Tournament but instead had to settle for just a near miss Tuesday night, May 14, in the Arkansas City Class 5A Regional.

The No. 3 seeded Wildcats and the No. 4 seeded Winfield Vikings knocked off the "hot shots" in first round games and were matching zeroes in the championship game for 11 innings before the Vikings nipped the Cats, 2-1, to

advance to the 5A State SB Championship.

The loss ended the year for Mulvane at 10-12.

"We played our best two games of the year when it counted," said Coach Charlie Mason. "But we left 10 runners on against Winfield and most of those were in the 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th innings. A lot of people stepped up big for us and our seniors went out on a very positive and high note. Sara (Simpson) pitched a great game (in the opener) and Katie Rose came up with a couple big hits for us. We just came up short."

The Wildcats advanced to the title game by toppling No. 2 seeded Kapaun Mt. Carmel earlier in the day, 2-1, and Winfield, which finished last in the Ark Valley League, upset AVL champion Ark City, 7-2, to set up the "underdog game" with a trip to 5A State on the line.

After Mulvane left the bases loaded in the 10th, Winfield won it in the 11th but it still wasn't easy. Mulvane rightfielder Sara Clasen's sensational diving catch on a sinking line drive set up a play at the plate. With one out and a Viking on 3rd base, Clasen made the catch and came up throwing. "It was a bang-bang play at the plate and she was called safe," said Mason. That turned out to be the winning run.

The Cats nearly won it in similar fashion earlier. In the bottom of the ninth, the Cats countered Winfield's run with a rally. Sara McKnight's slapped a single, scoring the tying run with two out but Kayla Linnebur was gunned down at the plate trying to score the winning run.

In the first game, the Cats upset Kapaun (15-6) behind pitching ace Sara Simpson's six-hit pitching. She struck out two and didn't allow a walk in her final prep mound appearance. The Cats won it with a run in the

5th which snapped a 1-1 tie. Katelyn Carson walked with none out and took second on a Simpson grounder. She scored when Stephanie Tatum's ground ball was errored.

"They (the regional games) were two tremendous games," said Mason. "That last one was just two teams battling, scratching, clawing, just doing what they could to get out."

Winfield Class 5A Regional Softball Tournament

CHAMPIONSHIP

Winfield	000 000 001 01--2	6
Mulvane	000 000 001 00--1	11
Underwood and Lowery; Shayna Duncan and Katelyn Carson.		

FIRST ROUND

Mulvane	100 010 0--2	3
Kapaun Mt. Carmel	010 000 0--1	6
Sara Simpson and Katelyn Carson; Rutzlaff and Schumacher.		

...
Winfield 7, Arkansas City 2