



Runner Abby Sorensen goes in head first at 3rd base against Girard in the opening round of 4A tournament at Salina

Softballers Knocked Out

Mulvane 'D' Collapses At 'The Wrong Time'

SALINA—A season of stellar defense for the Mulvane High School softball girls turned to ashes at the most inopportune time Friday evening, May 28, in the opening round of the Kansas Class 4A State Softball Tournament.

Playing Girard in the opening round of the 4A shootout at Burke Complex, the Wildcats stumbled with six outs to go and lost for the third consecutive time in the first round of the state tournament. The Trojans took advantage of five Mulvane errors and scored five unearned runs burning the Cats with a 6-3 victory.

The Cats marched into the 1996 State Championship but lost in the opening game to Clay Center, 3-0. Mulvane was back again in 1998 but lost in the 1st round to Desoto, 4-0.

Girard was the only "state-experienced" team in the eight-school field, having finished 3rd the past two state tournaments and the Trojans didn't blink when Mulvane grabbed a 3-1 lead with three runs in the 3rd inning and senior pitching ace, Shayna Duncan, throwing strikes.

But the Mulvane defense started to leak when Girard scored its first run in the 2nd inning and it turned into an all-out flood in the 6th inning as the Trojans scored the three winning runs with the help of three Cat errors. That helped end Mulvane's magic season at 16-8.

"It all came apart in that one inning," said Coach Charlie Mason. "It's really kind of sad. You have to play great defense and we didn't do it. And it was a situation where some of the errors were made by girls making their first errors of the season. We played great defense all season long, but we picked a bad time to make those errors. And at the same time, their pitcher got stronger as the game progressed. She finished with 10 strikeouts, which is the most we've had

all year long."

Duncan, who had given up only five walks the entire season until Friday night, yielded three to Girard and all three of the girls who walked scored runs.

"I really thought we had them when we went up 3-1 (in the 3rd inning)," confessed Mason. "but they kept putting the ball in play and we made some uncharacteristic mistakes. One of the things we always talk about is not giving a team more than three outs, and we did that. They took advantage of it."

The Trojans grabbed the early lead after Duncan walked the lead-off batter in the 2nd inning. A wild pitch and an error brought the run in. However the Wildcats struck for three runs in the 3rd to take the lead.

Whitney Phillips started the rally with a base on balls and went to 3rd when Katelyn Carson slapped a single. After two outs, junior Abby Sorensen smashed a double into the gap in right-center and both runs scored. After Sorensen stole third, Duncan hit one to the left side that was bobbled by the Girard second baseman and Sorensen scored.

The Trojans came back with a pair in the 4th to tie it, scoring both runs after a two-out dropped fly ball in centerfield.

The Trojans won the game in the 6th inning with three more runs behind three Mulvane errors. Girard's hurler finished strong, giving up only one hit in the last two and one-third innings after escaping a potential disaster in the 5th.

The Wildcats tried to add to their lead in the 5th when Stephanie Tatum singled and Sorensen cranked out another double with two outs and the middle of the Cat order coming up. Both runners were left stranded.

"When they came back and tied it up in the 4th was a big momentum swing for them," said Mason. "We were one catch away from getting out of the inning without them scoring. Yes, that was big."

The Wildcats ended the game with seven hits, two more than Girard got. Sorensen went 2-for-3 with two RBIs and one run scored, Tatum was 2-for-4 and senior Sara McKnight was 2-for-3.

"You can't take anything away from the girls, they played a great regional and got a chance to go to State," said Mason. "We've had a really good year. We were one of the best eight teams in the state, so you can't fault them for that. There were 56 teams that didn't get a chance to go."

Girard went on to finish second in 4A, losing a 4-3 game to Spring Hill for the 4A championship.

Pitcher Duncan 1st Team

The key ingredients on the Mulvane High School softball push to the 4A State Tournament were recognized for their season-long efforts with the announcement of the Chisholm Trail League Division I All-League Softball team earlier this week.

Coaches from all CTL schools gathered last week for the annual selection of the top players in the league and three players with the Wildcats were named to the 1st or 2nd teams.

Wildcat senior pitcher Shayna Duncan was named to the 1st team and senior Stephanie Tatum and Abby Sorensen, a junior, were selected to the all-league 2nd team. Tatum, a three-year starter, was named at both 1st base and pitcher and Sorensen was selected at 2nd base.

"These three girls have been standout players for us for several years," said Coach Charlie Mason. "Our success has kind of been tied to their success and they have been highly successful."

Duncan sparked the Wildcats drive to the state tournament last week as she posted an impressive earned run average of 1.68. She went 8-6 for the season but just as easily could have won 11 or 12 games. She lost three 1-0 games and gave up one run or less in nine of those games. She also finished the year giving up only eight walks—three of those coming in the final game of the season.

Sorensen and Tatum were the Cats' hitting ringleaders, helping carry the Cats to a 16-8 final record. Sorensen had the club's best hitting mark, hitting at a .359 clip. Tatum was Mulvane's No. 2 hitter with a .316 average. She also was 8-2 in the pitching department as Mulvane's No. 2 hurler.

Other Wildcats recognized were outfielders Sara McKnight and Tara Roberts as well as catcher Katelyn Carson. All three were selected to the honorable mention listings.

The Maize Eagles won the league title but had to share top billing on the CTL 1st team with Goddard. Both schools had three 1st team selections.

Chisholm Trail All-League Softball DIVISION I

First Team

1st Base--Natalie Critchfield, Augusta, Jr.
2nd Base--Kelsey Riffel, Maize, Jr.
3rd Base--Traci Doty, Valley Center, Jr.
Shortstop--Catlyn Pankratz, Buhler, Jr.
Outfielder--Abby Nordman, Augusta, Jr.
Outfielder--Angela Jakubov, Maize, Sr.
Outfielder--Kristen Osburn, Rose Hill, Soph.
Catcher--Katie Hoyt, Rose Hill, Sr.
Pitcher--Shayna Duncan, Mulvane, Sr.
Pitcher--Madison Petrich, Maize, Sr.
Pitcher--Sarah Mauck, Goddard, Sr.
Utility--Nicole Mercier, Goddard, Jr.
DH--Sarah Schrader, Goddard, Jr.

Second Team

1st Base--Stephanie Tatum, Mulvane, Sr.
2nd Base--Abby Sorensen, Mulvane, Jr.
3rd Base--Robyn Larson, Maize, Sr.
Shortstop--Della Smith, Rose Hill, Jr.
Outfielder--Katie Ternes, Goddard, Sr.
Outfielder--Madison Petrich, Maize, Sr.
Outfielder--Megan Truman, Valley Center, Sr.
Catcher--Shelly Vanhorn, Goddard, Sr.
Pitcher--Stephanie Tatum, Mulvane, Sr.
Pitcher--Rachel Kramer, Maize, Jr.
Pitcher--Ashley Spalding, Augusta, Jr.
Utility--Jamee Farmer, Augusta, Jr.

Honorable Mention

1st Base--Sara Unruh, Buhler; 2nd Base--Kate Robinson, Buhler; 3rd Base--Shayna Duncan, Mulvane; Leah Heide, Buhler; Shortstop--Holly Taylor, Valley Center; Megan Welch, Goddard; Outfielders--Sara McKnight, Mulvane; Tara Roberts, Mulvane; Catchers--Katelyn Carson, Mulvane; Sara Sidebottom, Buhler; Betsy Moody, Valley Center; Pitchers--Kate Robinson, Buhler; Kelsey Schmidt, Valley Center; Utility--Ayuna Brown, Buhler.

Kansas Class 4A State Softball Tournament

CHAMPIONSHIP

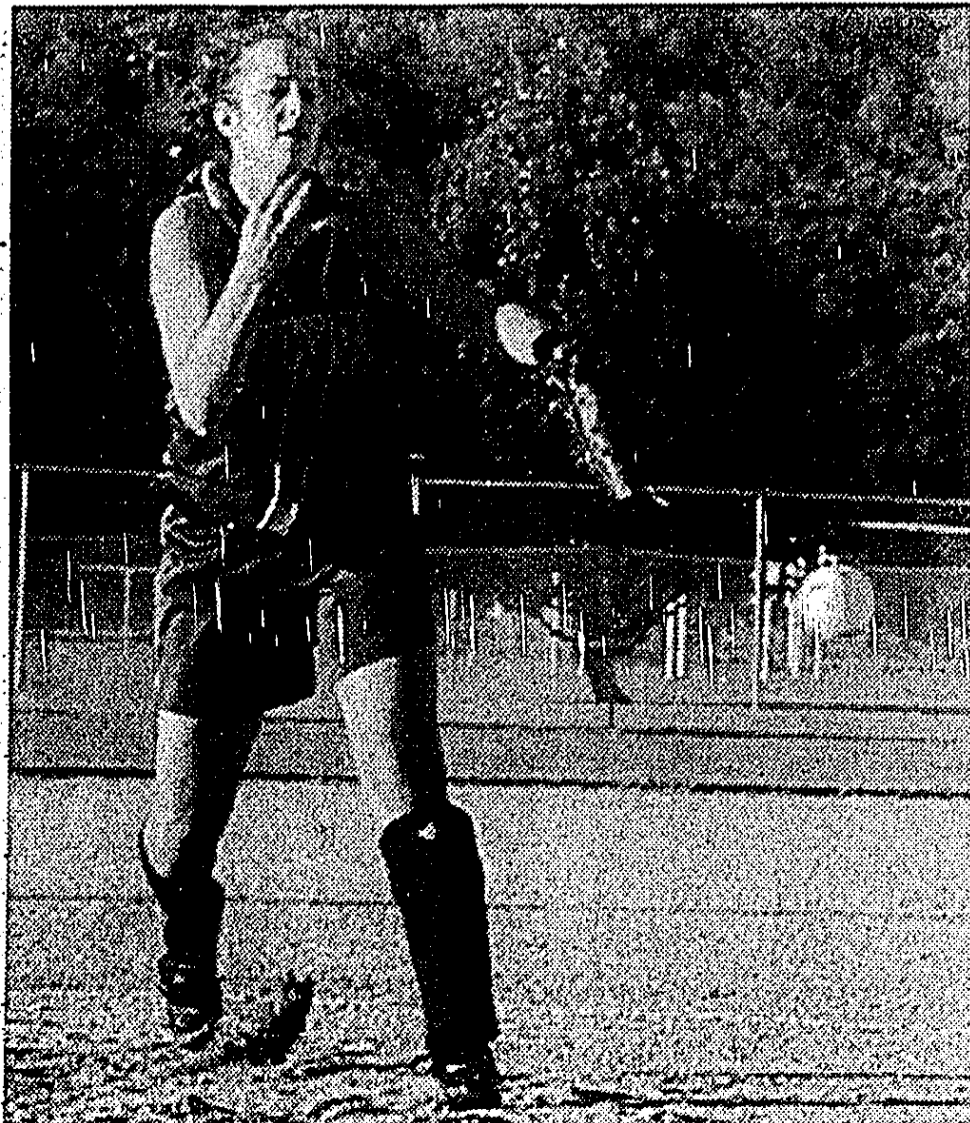
Spring Hill 4, Girard 3

THIRD PLACE

Lansing 1, Clay Center 0

FIRST ROUND

Mulvane 003 000 0--3 6
Girard 010 203 x--6 3
Shayna Duncan and Katelyn Carson; Poppe and Murphy.
Clay Center 5, Collegiate 3
Spring Hill 3, Kansas City Ward 0
Lansing 1, Colby 0



Mulvane senior pitcher Shayna Duncan fires off a strike against Girard