

Cat Girls Roll Into Winner's Bracket

A different defense and an improved offense. That's what the Mulvane High School girls had going for them in the second half Tuesday night, Jan. 28, in their opening round game in the 17th annual Wildcat Girls Classic at MHS gym.

And that proved to be enough to rally the host Wildcats as they came on strong in the final half to post a 64-55 verdict over Andover. In the earlier game Tuesday night, Andale jumped ahead quickly and held on for a 60-43 decision over Clearwater.

The Cats and Andale will tangle at 7 p.m. tonight (Jan. 30) in one semifinal with Garden Plain and Wellington playing at 8:45 in the other side of the winner's bracket.

For the first half, a repeat of a Circle tourney game in December appeared to be the MHS destiny. Andover made a big push just before intermission to take a 30-25 lead. Earlier this year, the Trojans clipped Mulvane, 50-43.

Not this time, though. The Cats out-scored Andover, 39-25, in the second half to pull away for their 7th victory in 11 games. "The big difference was that they went to a man-to-man defense in the second half and that really helped us," confessed MHS coach Kelly Dennis. "We were able to get the ball to Dannelle (Hughes) easier and she became more aggressive and went to the basket. We also got some spark from our bench. Kristen Buchanan is really a spark-plug for us and she came in in the second half and got us going. So did Shelley Richards and Kassie Hargrove."

The Trojans came on to take the lead in the second quarter and it was tight most of the second half, but Andover's top player, Cassie Blair, fouled out with about five minutes left in the game. When she left, so did the Andover offense.

"Our offense kept on plugging and when she left, it really helped because it was a close game," said Dennis. "We'd score and they would match us. I thought our girls answered the character question, though. It would have been easy for us to be on the losing end, but I think the girls have turned the corner."

Offensively, the Wildcats continue to get broad-based support. Big center Hughes finished with a game-high 17 points. Guard Lindsay Kendrick scored 12 points, Crissy Carpenter finished with 11, Richards tossed in nine off the bench and Melissa Buchanan scored six.

"I think our ability to score was the difference in the first game we played them and this one," said Dennis. "We're getting a lot more production plus a lot of production from girls off the bench. I think we're a different team than we were in December."

Ever get the feeling that the MHS girls are on their way up? It didn't take long for that feeling to surface Friday night, Jan. 24, at home when Augusta came to town.

The Orioles are hapless, this is true. But the Wildcats roared past them with authority in a 71-40 stomping, giving Coach Dennis' team their third consecutive victory and plenty of confidence heading into this week's Wildcat Girls Classic.

Hughes scored 20 points to lead the way but she had a ton of help. Richards finished with a career-high 11 points, Kendrick scored nine, Kassie Hargrove added seven and Carpenter scored six.

The jayvee Wildcats weren't as successful as the Orioles nosed them out, 28-25.

Guard Rachel Rose scored 10 points for Mulvane's JV's, Ashley McCoskey scored four and Shiriah Craft had three.

17th Annual Mulvane Wildcat Girls Classic

FIRST ROUND

Andover	9	21	13	12-55
Mulvane	12	13	19	20-64

Andover—Alyssa Thurman 4, Ashley Thurman 5, Cassie Blair 15, Bryan 6, Gorrell 5, Chapman 7, Sanders 6, Kincaid 7. FG 22 (3), FT 8-17, F 22.

Mulvane—Lindsay Kendrick 12, Crissy Carpenter 11, Melissa Buchanan 6, Dannelle Hughes 17, Kassie Hargrove 3, Shelley Richards 9, Kristen Buchanan 2. FG 24 (3), FT 13-22, F 17.

Andale 60, Clearwater 43
Garden Plain 74, Arkansas City 42
Wellington 64, Campus 46

Mulvane Wildcat Girls Classic Pairings

TODAY (JAN. 30)

- Game 5 — Andover vs. Clearwater, 3:30 p.m.
- Game 6 — Arkansas City vs. Campus, 5:15
- Game 7 — Mulvane vs. Andale, 7
- Game 8 — Garden Plain vs. Wellington, 8:45

SATURDAY, FEB. 1

- Game 9 (Seventh Place)—losers of games 5 and 6, 2 p.m.
- Game 10 (Fifth Place)—winners of games 5 and 6, 3:45
- Game 11 (Third Place)—losers of games 7 and 8, 5:30
- Game 12 (Championship)—winners of games 7 and 8, 7:30

Varsity Girls

Augusta	4	9	13	14-40
Mulvane	21	20	23	7-71

Augusta—Corcoran 6, Rinkenbaugh 2, Dixon 2, Stowell 9, Randall 3, Arthaud 6, Mai 10, Crichfield 1. FG 12 (1), FT 15-27, F 13.

Mulvane—Dannelle Hughes 20, Melissa Buchanan 4, Crissy Carpenter 6, Lindsay Kendrick 9, Shelley Richards 11, Kristen Buchanan 4, Victoria Padilla 4, Ashley McCoskey 2, Heather Williams 2, Jennifer McCoskey 2, Kassie Hargrove 7. FG 31 (2), FT 7-13, F 22.

Junior Varsity Girls

Augusta	7	7	8	6-28
Mulvane	6	3	7	9-25

Augusta—Usher 4, Arthaud 2, Nibbelink 2, Carr 2, Rinkenbaugh 3, Bork 1, Williamson 2, Randall 10, Terrick 2. FG 12 (1), FT 3-8, F 14.

Mulvane—Victoria Padilla 2, Ashley McCoskey 4, Rachel Rose 10, Kristen Buchanan 2, Shiriah Craft 3, Kristal LaPlant 2, Heather Williams 2. FG 10 (1), FT 4-9, F 15.