

Snow Slows MHS Girls; Finals Rescheduled

In a strange, twisted way, the elements have it in for the Mulvane High School girls.

The Wildcat girls make the finals of their own tournament for only the third time in the tournament's 24-year history and then, snow!

Coach Jayson Miller's MHS girls slugged it out with Andale Thursday night, Feb. 5, in a semifinal game and held on at the end for a 35-34 victory to march into the championship game of the 24th annual Mulvane Wildcat Girls Classic.

Wellington upset Garden Plain, 37-34, in the other semifinal but Mother Nature stepped in and dumped ice and snow in the area Saturday, Jan. 31, so the tourney had to be postponed one week.

That championship encounter will take place at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7, at the MHS gym.

"I wish it could have been played last Saturday, we were ready and we were fired up," said Coach Miller. "But it's just one of those things."

Even the elements are conspiring against the Cat girls. Mulvane had won the tournament only one time in the tournament history. That was in 1991. And the Cats have only made the finals twice. They finished second in 1990.

Beating Andale was an accomplishment in itself. The Indians have an excellent program and it's been 10 years since the Wildcats topped Andale. During the 1993-94 season, Mulvane rolled past the Indians, 51-40.

"Andale was a great win for us, one that's been a long time coming," said Miller. "I don't know how long it's been since we beat them but it's been a while."

The first three frantic minutes nearly buried the Wildcats. The Indians jumped

out to a 11-3 lead but by the end of the 1st quarter, the score was knotted at 13's.

"It was really scary in those first three minutes," said Miller. "I mean, we were doing exactly opposite of what we had planned on doing, but the girls refocused their game and we got things back together. When Abby (Sorensen) hit that three pointer just before the buzzer at the first quarter mark, it was a huge momentum swing from our standpoint. As poorly as we had started, we were still right there tied with them. It gave the girls a tremendous confidence boost."

The Wildcat girls worked their way out to a 34-30 edge with just 25 seconds to play and had a steal by Kayla Oblinger that led to a foul shot by Sorensen. She missed the front end and the Indians charged back to within two, 34-32, with 17 seconds left. Sorensen again was fouled and hit the back end of two throws for a 35-32 lead with just 13 seconds to tick.

Andale triggered a three-pointer with five seconds left but missed it. However, the Indians got the rebound and put it back in for a one-point deficit. Duncan missed two free throws with 1.6 seconds left.

"The whole game wasn't over until that buzzer," said Miller. "It was really exciting for our girls."

What Miller was most proud of was the Cats' composure down the stretch—aside from missing key free throws. The Wildcats had the tempo in their hands all of the 4th quarter.

"Neither team scored much but that was about the most patient we've been all year long," observed Miller. "The girls were hanging onto a slender lead but they just worked the ball and worked the ball. We

24th Annual Mulvane Wildcat Girls Classic

CHAMPIONSHIP

Wellington vs. Mulvane, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7

THIRD PLACE

Andale vs. Garden Plain, 5:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7

FIFTH PLACE

Clearwater vs. Campus, 3:45 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7

SEVENTH PLACE

Arkansas City vs. Andover, 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 7

SEMIFINALS

Mulvane 13, 11, 6, 5, 35

Andale 13, 7, 10, 4, 34

Mulvane: Stephanie Tatum 2, Abby Sorensen 14,

Megan Turner 2, Shayna Duncan 10, Lara Roberts 6, FG 14/31, FT 4/13, FT 1/1

Andale: Justine Prange 10, Ali Steven 5, Jessica

Manno 15, Jennifer Clupny 2, Amy Steven 2, FG 14/41,

FT 8/9, FT 1/1

Wellington 3, Garden Plain 31

Clearwater 55, Arkansas City 33

Campus 43, Andover 26

Girls Varsity

Valley Center 12, 13, 15, 10, 50

Mulvane 3, 3, 8, 9, 23

Valley Center: Stephanie Cheney 2, Jennifer Noel 8,

Laura Schwab 4, Kelley Porter 3, Tessa Morrow 1,

Ali Klein 3, Lauren Venning 13, Kaylee Weichman 4,

Kate Kusler 2, FG 22/43, FT 2/6, FT 0/0

Mulvane: Lara Roberts 6, Josey Gosch 4, Abby

Sorensen 17, Shayna Duncan 4, Megan Turner 1, Natash

Pattam 2, FG 7/11, FT 8/11, FT 0/0

must have taken a minute off every time we had it. They didn't panic and stuck to what we wanted to do. We didn't want to rush down the floor and throw up a shot quickly. They always seem like the team that stays composed and comes down to the last and beats us but Friday night, we were the team that was composed."

That strategy seemed to get Andale out of its transition game, too, because the Indians

only scored four points in the last quarter.

"The only thing about that game that I wasn't pleased with was our free throwing," said Miller. "We were 4 of 12 at the stripe and could have iced the game. We just had a lot of misses."

Sorensen had another huge game, scoring 14 points. Duncan was in double figures with 10 points. Tara Roberts came off the bench to hit six points and both Stephanie Tatum and Megan Turner had two.

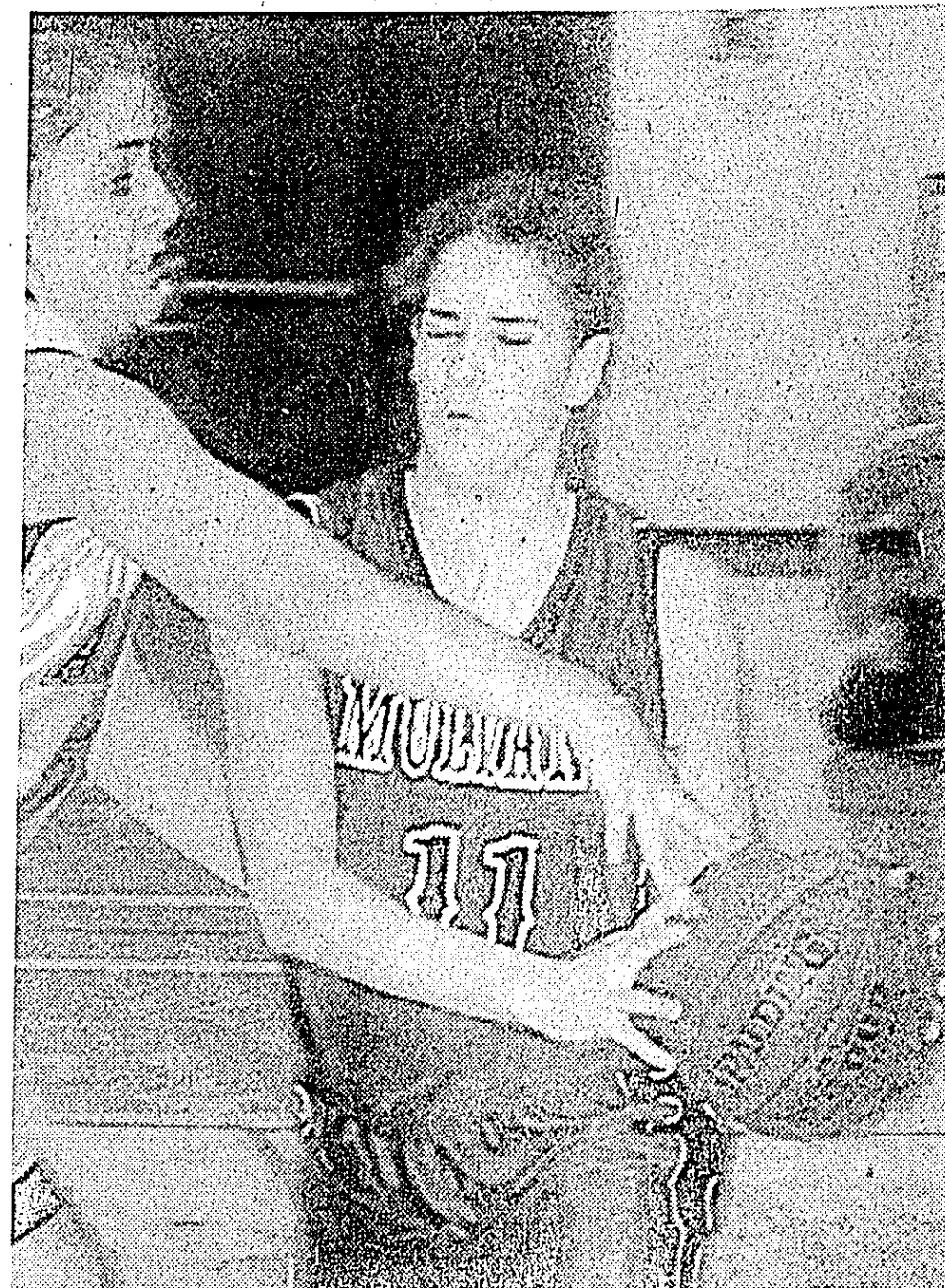
The MHS girls jumped back into CTL play Tuesday night, Feb. 3, and took a step or two backward from their play in the tournament. Valley Center came to town and demolished the Wildcats, 50-23. It was Mulvane's lowest scoring game of the entire season.

"There's no other way to say it, we just played a very poor game," said Miller. "We played sloppy basketball, we had turnovers that went right off our fingertips. The longer that game went, the uglier it got for us."

The Hornets, who improved their record to 10-4 and 5-1 in the CTL, ripped into the Cats from the start. They took a 12-3 lead after one quarter and by intermission, the game was out of hand with VC owning a 28-6 lead.

"I'm very disappointed because it was a one-step backwards," emphasized Miller. "We need to find a way to reverse that and not be a bunny. What was most frustrating is that I'd look out there on the floor and we'd have two or three girls going hard and the others just coasting. I don't know what it was but we didn't play as a team."

What offense there was, Lara Roberts off the bench and Sorensen had it. Each scored six points. Josey Gosch and Shayna Duncan had four points each.



Mulvane's Stephanie Tatum (11) grimaces as she gets fouled by an Indian defender