

Wildcat Girls Advance To Semis

Some things are so ugly, they're beautiful.

That was the case Tuesday night, March 4, for the Mulvane High School girls. The Wildcats escaped with an opening round win over Clearwater, 61-57, in a Augusta Class 4A Sub-State game played in Mulvane.

The Cats advanced to Friday night's semifinals at Augusta against No. 2 seeded Andale. Clearwater's season is over with a 3-18 record. The Cats chalked up their first sub-state victory in five years since tripping Fredonia in the first round of the Bluestem 4A Sub-State back in the 1991-92 season.

"It wasn't pretty but we got the job done," said Cat coach Kelly Dennis. "We played hard. Clearwater shot extremely well but in the fourth quarter we held on. Lindsay Kendrick hit a bucket that gave us a seven point lead, Crissy Carpenter hit a shot late and Dannelle Hughes made some free throws in the last couple of minutes that we needed."

The Wildcats actually had an 11-point lead with about a minute to play when Kendrick fouled out and took her ball handling skills to the bench with her. Clearwater, pressing frantically, made it

close down to the wire but Mulvane held on.

"I'm happy that that game's over," said Dennis, who is in her second year. "We were ahead almost all the way and in fact had a double digit lead several times but we let them get back into the contest late."

It was Mulvane's third triumph over the Indians this season. One about two weeks ago was almost a carbon copy of Tuesday's game. "The girls definitely hit some free throws down the stretch, but we missed some, too," noted Dennis. "I thought Clearwater played well and in spite of that, we got things accomplished. I know these girls can do so much. I just don't know if they can 'seize the moment.'"

Hughes had a huge game, scoring 23 points. She did much of her damage inside getting fouled. She made 11 of 18 from the stripe. In fact, it was free throwing that was the difference. Clearwater dumped in 20 field goals but went only 13-for-24 at the line while the Wildcats made 23 of 36 free throws.

Senior Melissa Buchanan, playing her final game at home, scored 11 points. "Melissa came up big for us tonight," emphasized Dennis. "She does a lot of

things out there that really help us." Kendrick finished with eight points and both Shelley Richards and Carpenter also had eight-point nights.

Now, the Cats have to tame Andale, a team that beaten the Wildcats three times this year. Making it four might be pretty tough. "All the pressure is on Andale because they are expected to win," responded Dennis. "If we go down the court and get a shot every time, we have a great shot at beating them. We just have to keep from turning the ball over."

The MHS girls haven't been in a Sub-State championship game since the 1990-91 season. Mulvane went to state that year.

The Wildcat girls closed out their regular season on a sour note. Circle came to town and chopped the Cats down to size, 64-50, in the last Chisholm Trail League game Thursday night, Feb. 27.

It wasn't a pretty night for the MHS girls, who had squeezed past the Thunderbirds, 58-54, in double overtime back in December at Circle.

"We didn't play well at all," said Dennis. "I thought we shot the ball well. We had eight three-pointers and hit about 50% from beyond the line, but if we hadn't, it would have really gotten ugly. Circle was just more physical than we were and the shot the ball better than we did. It's very tough for us to play physical teams. We just don't seem to be able to hold up against physical teams."

The T-Birds took charge in the third quarter after nudging into a small lead at intermission. Circle was ahead, 32-28, at halftime, then ran it out to a 10-point lead in the third quarter.

"They zoned us and you couldn't much tell our inside players were even on the floor," added Coach Dennis. "Dannelle didn't move very good. I've seen her move a lot better down low, anyway. Just about everybody played poorly. On the other hand, Circle played extremely well, I thought, and we just didn't step up and match them."

The Thunderbirds pulled away in the second quarter, out-scoring the Wildcats, 22-9, to make things easy. Then, Circle followed that up by out-scoring Mulvane, 24-8, in the 3rd quarter. Turn the lights out when you leave.

"When we played them back in December, they didn't have two of their best players," said Dennis. "We also played better than we did Thursday night. It really gets down to playing well. If we don't play well,

anybody can beat us, but if we play well, we can be one of the best teams in the league. It's one of the uncertainties of the game."

Freshman Kassie Hargrove and sophomore Lindsay Kendrick were top scorers, each hitting 14 points. Hughes and Melissa Buchanan on the inside were held under wraps. They scored only six points each. Senior Crissy Carpenter and Shelley Richards had five points apiece and that represented all of the MHS offense.

The Wildcat junior varsity has its troubles, too, and ended its season at 5-9 under Coach Dale Landes. The T-Birds dumped Mulvane's jayvees, 51-38.

Rachel Rose led a balanced assault for Mulvane. She had eight points. Hargrove had seven points and Krystal LaPlant and Victoria Padilla scored six points each. Angela McCoskey and Kristen Buchanan checked in with four-point games.

Augusta 4A Girls Sub-State Results

FRIDAY, MARCH 7

6 p.m.-- Andale (15-6) vs. Mulvane (12-9)

7:30-- Rose Hill (17-4) vs. Circle (11-10)

SATURDAY, MARCH 8

6 p.m. (Girls Championship)--winners of Friday night's games

Augusta 4A Girls Sub-State Results

FIRST ROUND

Clearwater	9	14	14	20-57
Mulvane	16	13	14	18-61

Clearwater--Tara Pauly 20, Emily Chambers 4, Trish Doll 9, Brenda Seiter 2, Faith Struthers 19, Nikki Pike 3. FG 20 (4), FT 13-24, F 17.

Mulvane--Lindsay Kendrick 8, Shelley Richards 8, Dannelle Hughes 23, Crissy Carpenter 8, Melissa Buchanan 11, Kristen Buchanan 1, Victoria Padilla 2. FG 19 (0), FT 23-36, F 21.

Andale 54, Chaparral 30

Rose Hill 71, Augusta 22

Circle 57, Kingman 41

Varsity Girls

Circle	13	19	15	17-64
Mulvane	12	16	9	13-50

Circle--Jessica Ammerman 4, Mica Hammer 4, Erica Collins 19, Gina Hall 4, Amber Laughlin 14, Kristy Hodgens 2, Keri Seidl 7, Danielle Hecker 2, Allison Berry 8. FG 22 (3), FT 17-23, F 10.

Mulvane--Kassie Hargrove 14, Lindsay Kendrick 14, Crissy Carpenter 5, Melissa Buchanan 6, Dannelle Hughes 6, Shelley Richard 5. FG 20 (8), FT 2-6, F 18.

Junior Varsity Girls

Circle	12	14	11	14-51
Mulvane	2	19	9	8-38

Circle--Sandy Smithson 12, Sara Wolf 2, Jessica Ammerman 8, Nicole Pursell 2, Gina Hall 14, Laine Pond 2, Dana Hall 7. FG 15 (2), FT 7-11, F 15.

Mulvane--Kristen Buchanan 4, Krystal LaPlant 6, Heather Williams 2, Kassie Hargrove 7, Rachel Rose 8, Victoria Padilla 6, Angela McCoskey 4, Andrea Hufford 1. FG 17 (1), FT 3-10, F 13.