

MHS Comeback Keys Sweep

Pitching potential has been one of the biggest concerns for Mulvane High School baseball coach David Katzenmeier this season.

While the defending 4A state champion has his two main starters returning, the Cats staff hasn't been a tower of strength as the Wildcat skipper had hoped. "But we're getting by," said Katzenmeier.

Mulvane barely got by Monday, April 20, in a doubleheader in Mulvane against Andover. The Cats toasted the visiting Trojans, 13-4, in the opener, then rallied from a 3-0 deficit in the second game for a 5-3 victory, pushing their record to 6-2 for the season.

"We're not pitching up to our potential yet and we're winning so I guess that speaks well of the day when we will get our staff on target," said Katzenmeier. "They're getting better each day and that's what we need."

Katzenmeier was pleased to see the spark after falling behind, 3-0, in the second game Monday. "That was a good game for us," said Katzenmeier. "Last year, we had a lot of come-from-behind victories and that's what we did Monday. I just sat back and wanted to see if we could do it. It would have been real easy to hang the heads in that five inning game after they banged our ace around and took a 3-0 lead with two innings to play, but we sucked it up."

Andover treated righthander Morgan LeClair roughly as the Trojans marched out to 3-0 after three innings. A five-run fourth paved the way for the victory. Shay Cornejo, who went 4-for-4 for the day, rapped a single and Dan LeClair walked in front of a triple by Morgan LeClair scoring two runs. Kyle Steadman walked and Chris Caywood kept things going with a two-run double, then scored on Sean Gillespie's single. Gillespie came in on Rob Whitmer's triple.

In the opener, Mulvane rapped 13 hits to win easily in front of senior Curtis Hicks, who scattered six hits.

The big guns for Mulvane were Dan LeClair with three hits and Morgan LeClair with three hits and Brian Unruh, Cornejo and Hicks with two hits each. Dan LeClair was playing his first games of the season after waiting for a knee brace to arrive.

In one of the most crucial battles of the Chisholm Trail League season Thursday, April 16, the Wildcats and Valley Center split a doubleheader, Mulvane booming out to a 9-7 winner in the first game but losing, 2-1, in the nightcap.

"We played good enough to win both games but didn't," said Katzenmeier. "We're not where we should be yet, I don't feel. Our pitchers are still coming around and we're 4-2, so I guess I can't feel too badly. I know we're going to get better."

The Wildcats scored three times in the sixth inning to snap a 6-6 tie and send the visiting Hornets to defeat. Curtis Hicks started that inning by busting an inside-the-park home run off the 380 sign in right-centerfield. The Valley centerfielder slammed into the fence

CHISHOLM TRAIL LEAGUE BASEBALL

First Game
Andover 300 10-4 6
Mulvane 462 14-13 13
Davis and Shephard, Curtis Hicks and Brian Schmidt

Second Game
Andover 012 00-3 4
Mulvane 000 5x-5 6
Homer and Miller, Morgan LeClair and Brian Schmidt

First Game
Valley Center 111 030 1-7 7
Mulvane 033 003 x-9 9
Nichter, Brown, Phipps 5 and Spike Anderson, Shay Cornejo 4, Curtis Hicks 5 and Brian Schmidt
HR: Reeves (4), Curtis Hicks (1)

Second Game
Valley Center 001 01-2 3
Mulvane 100 00-1 5
Spike Anderson and Sharpe, Morgan LeClair and Brian Schmidt

and fell as Hicks circled the sacks.

The Cats followed that up with a double by Morgan LeClair and an RBI base hit by Kyle Steadman followed by a balk play worked to perfection to enable LeClair to score.

Hicks finished with two hits, as did Steadman. Brian Unruh also had two hits.

"You still feel bad any time you split but I think we kept our heads up after they scored on that three-run homer to tie it in the fifth inning," said Katzenmeier. "Offensively, we put some runs on the board in the first inning but I was disappointed in the second game. It didn't seem their pitcher was that good but he got the job done. He must have had something."

Valley used the same balk play to score a run against the Wildcats in the nightcap. Mulvane took a 1-0 lead in the first inning when Shay Cornejo reached on an error, stole two bases and scored on a double by Morgan LeClair. The Hornets came back to tie it at 1-1 in the third inning on a balk by LeClair, who had control problems as he walked five and hit one batsman. He gave up only three hits and fanned six.

The Wildcats had two other opportunities to score but base-running errors hurt. Sean Gillespie walked in the second and was thrown out at third just before Chris Caywood singled. In the final inning, Unruh singled, his fourth hit of the day, but he was gunned down stealing second one pitch before Cornejo triple.

"I didn't look too good on that one but that's baseball," said Katzenmeier. "Unruh is our fastest kid and we had two of our best hitters coming up, I figured if we could get him to second, we'd tie it up but Valley made a great play to stop us."

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