

Baseballers Split Hurts Title Hopes

Mulvane's chances to repeat as the Chisholm Trail League baseball champion certainly weren't enhanced by Circle's Thunderbirds in a double-header Monday, April 27, in Mulvane. The T-birds clipped the Wildcats, 10-9, in the first game before Mulvane "ace" Morgan LeClair mowed 'em down in the second game, 5-0, with a one-hitter.

The Wildcats, now 8-4 in the league and 10-4 overall, stand behind Goddard and Nickerson in the loss column in the CTL standings.

"We just weren't prepared in the first game," said MHS coach David Katzenmeier. "It was a pretty wild affair, but we didn't do anything to help ourselves by splitting."

The Thunderbirds jumped on Cat starter Shay Cornejo for five runs in the second inning and added four more in the fifth. Mulvane nearly had a great comeback but a three-run rally in the bottom of the seventh inning fell short. Designated hitter Danny LeClair led off the inning with a double and scored on Morgan LeClair's triple. Kyle Steadman's sac fly plated M. LeClair before Chris Caywood doubled, then scored on Rob Whitmer's base knock. However, Whitmer died on second as the last two batters were cut down.

"They had a couple walks and a couple of bloop hits and the walks hurt," said Katzenmeier. "We made a super effort to get back in the ball game, but we still need our No. 2 pitcher to start doing something."

In the nightcap, LeClair hurled his finest game to date, striking out 4 batters in the process. He also had a school-record nine strikeouts in a row. He walked only one.

Mulvane scored the only runs needed in a two-run second inning when back-to-back doubles by the LeClair brothers were followed by RBI singles by Steadman and Caywood.

The Wildcats continued to split the big series games in the Chisholm Trail. The Cats played at home Thursday, April 23, because Augusta's field was not suitable for play, and the Cats zipped the Orioles in the opener, 7-0, but faltered in the second game, 12-4.

The split dropped Mulvane's CTL record to 7-3 in the league and 9-3 overall.

Right-hander Morgan LeClair torched the Orioles in the first game, spacing three

CHISHOLM TRAIL LEAGUE

First Game

Circle	050 040 1-10 9
Mulvane	000.402 3-9 14

Willshire, Will Johnson 7, and Mark Johnson; Shay Cornejo and Brian Schmidt.

Second Game

Circle	000 00-0 1
Mulvane	020 3x-5 10

Wyant and Mark Johnson; Morgan LeClair and Chris Caywood.

First Game

Mulvane	200 32-7 11
Augusta	000 00-0 3

Morgan LeClair and Brian Schmidt; Trent Nesmith, Brad Winsor 5, and Bill Chandler.
HR—Chris Caywood (M).

Second Game

Mulvane	004 00-4 5
Augusta	704 1x-12 8

Curtis Hicks, Kyle Steadman 1, and Brian Schmidt; William Palmer, Leroy Towns 3, and Bill Chandler.

hits and fanning a season-high 11 batters. He ran his record to 5-1, as he gave up no walks and faced only 18 batters.

Mulvane scored all the runs needed in the first inning when Brian Unruh walked but was forced at second by Curtis Hicks. M. LeClair singled in front of RBI hits by Dan LeClair and Kyle Steadman.

The Cats scored three more in the fourth after outfielder Chris Caywood led off the inning with a solo homer. Rob Whitmer followed by walking and scoring on Unruh's triple to right-centerfield. Unruh scored on a two-out single by M. LeClair. The final two runs crossed on RBI hits by Whitmer and pinch hitter John Melick in the fifth.

Things weren't so rosy in the nightcap after Augusta batted around and scored seven coming out of the chute against righthander Curtis Hicks. Five walks hurt Hicks in the inning but so did two errors.

Mulvane's only scoring came in the third inning when Katzenmeier's boys closed the gap to 7-4. Unruh walked and Hicks and M. LeClair both singled for a run. Steadman rapped a triple to center field and scored on an error by the fielder.

Mulvane will be back in action at 4 p.m. today (April 30) w. b a double-header at Goddard, the club's final CTL action outing the league tournament, which is scheduled to be at Circle and Mulvane starting Monday, May 4. Pairings will not be available until final league games are played. Call the high school to find out when the Cats play and where.