



Running back John Knight (21) cuts behind a block by Andrew Myers in the Cats' home opener against Buhler Friday night

# MHS Cats Overcome Mistakes; Dump Buhler

Mulvane High School head football coach Dave Fennewald will probably be the first to tell you his Wildcats didn't really play very well in their home opener Friday night, Sept. 9, against Buhler.

The 'Cats had six turnovers, four in the first quarter alone. They had 11 penalties for 174 yards, including two flags that called back

touchdowns. At times, it seemed like they were doing everything they could to lose the game.

And they still won, 21-7, for their first win of the season. The 'Cats are now 1-1 in AVCTL Division III and overall. Go figure.

"Of course, you'll always take the win," said Fennewald afterward. "The biggest thing I saw is how much this team has matured since last season. With four turnovers in the first quarter, we might not have been able to bounce back from that last year. But these guys, they didn't point fingers, they didn't let those mistakes fester in the back of their heads. They stayed focused, and our defense played especially well all game long."

The game started ominously enough. Buhler's opening kickoff bounced off a Mulvane player on the front line and the Crusaders recovered. The 'Cats quickly forced a punt, but then the fumbles started, including three from running back John Knight. It may have seemed just like one of those nights, but the cause was actually quite simple.

"Believe it or not, it was the Under Armour gear he was wearing," said Fennewald with a chuckle. "It looks good, but it's slicker than most people realize. I know because my son had the same problem in a youth bowl game last year. John changed out of that gear after the first quarter, and he had no problems after that."

Things got better for Knight in the second quarter, when he took a pitch from quarterback Ryan Herrig and broke free for a 29-yard touchdown run, giving Mulvane a 7-0 lead. The offense kept rolling on the next possession, which resulted in an 8-yard TD keeper by Herrig to make the score 14-0.

Buhler	0	0	7	0-7
Mulvane	0	14	7	0-21

#### Scoring

**Touchdowns**—Buhler: Andrew Holmes (20, pass from Brandon Stringer). Mulvane: Ryan Herrig 2 (8, 2, runs), John Knight (29, run).

**Points after touchdowns**—Buhler: Chase Loudonback (kick). Mulvane: Brit Ericson 3 (kicks)

#### TEAM STATISTICS

	Buhler	Mulvane
First Downs	3	11
Rushing Yards	62	255
Passing Yards	19	100
Total Offense	81	355
Pass Completions	4	7
Pass Attempts	23	9
Passes Intercepted	1	1
Fumbles Lost	0	5
Punts/Average	7/33.5	1/36
Penalties/Yards	7/35	11/174

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

##### Rushing

**Buhler**—Connor Bridge 7 carries-24 yards, Alex Juby 8-19, Robby Gray 8-11, Rowell Acsay 2-5, Brandon Stringer 1-4, Jason Davis 9-(minus 1). **Mulvane**—John Knight 10-106, Sage Swaney 10-69, Ryan Herrig 15-52, Caleb NeSmith 7-28

##### Passing

**Buhler**—Brandon Stringer 1 completion-11 attempts-20 yards-0 INT-1 TD, Jason Davis 3-12-0-1-1-0. **Mulvane**—Ryan Herrig 7-9-100-1-0

##### Receiving

**Buhler**—Andrew Holmes 1 reception-20 yards, Travis Read 1-5, Nathan Lind 2-(minus 6). **Mulvane**—John Knight 2-48, Tyler Oblinger 2-44, Sage Swaney 2-0, Caleb NeSmith 1-8

#### DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

Brit Ericson 2 tackles-9 assists, Hulton Tharp 2-7, Caleb NeSmith 1-6, Andrew Myers 2-4, Kyle Womacks 0-6, Sage Swaney 3-2, Syler Swaney 0-4, John Knight 0-4, Matt Carden 2-1, Chad Blackwell 1-2, Jacob Hatfield 1-1, Tyler Oblinger 0-1, Aaron Elston 0-1, Ryan Herrig 0-1, Jacob Parker 0-1

**Interception**—Syler Swaney

Mulvane kept their roll going early in the third quarter. After forcing another quick punt, the 'Cats put together another scoring drive, this one ending with a two-yard TD run by Herrig to make the score 21-0. After that, it was all about the Wildcat defense, which 'held Buhler' to three first downs and 81 yards of total offense, including a combined 4-of-23 passing from their quarterbacks.

"Our defense just played an outstanding game," said Fennewald. "Our linebackers really swarmed to the ball, and our pass coverage did a great job. Our defensive line didn't get any sacks, but they pressured their quarterbacks well. They're still working on their rushing technique, but they're improving."

Mulvane finished with 335 yards of total offense, with 235 coming on the ground. Knight finished with 106 yards on just 10 carries and caught two passes for 48 yards. Sage Swaney added 69 yards on 10 carries. Herrig was 7-of-9 passing for 100 yards and added 52 yards rushing. Fullback Caleb NeSmith carried seven times for 28 yards. Tyler Oblinger had two receptions for 44 yards. Defensively, Brit Ericson was in on 11 tackles while freshman Hulton Tharp had nine stops. NeSmith made seven tackles while Kyle Womacks and Andrew Myers each had six. Syler Swaney had an interception for the second straight game.

The only negatives, of course, were the turnovers and the penalties. "We had two scores called back," said Fennewald. "In both cases, we were called for an illegal block that happened at least 20 yards away from the ball carrier. We have to be aware of the situation on the field at all times. We can't afford to keep making mistakes like that. We have to get into the habit of doing things the right way."

The Wildcats will get another big test Friday night, Sept. 16, when they host Andale (2-0) from AVCTL Division IV. The game at Lyle Couch Field will kick off at 7 p.m.

## AVCTL III-IV Football Standings

### Division III

Team	League		Overall	
	W	L	W	L
Augusta	2	0	2	0
Rose Hill	2	0	2	0
Wellington	1	0	2	0
Mulvane	1	1	1	1
Buhler	0	2	0	2
El Dorado	0	2	0	2

### Division IV

Andale	2	0	2	0
Andover	1	0	1	1
Andover Central	1	1	1	1
Kingman	1	1	1	1
Circle	0	1	0	2
Clearwater	0	2	0	2

### Results from Sept. 2

Mulvane 21, Buhler 7  
Rose Hill 38, Circle 10  
Wellington 20, Andover 6  
Augusta 37, El Dorado 9  
Andale 21, Andover Central 7  
Kingman 22, Clearwater 0

### Games Friday, Sept. 9

(All games start at 7 p.m.)

Andale at Mulvane  
Augusta at Rose Hill  
El Dorado at Buhler  
Arkansas City at Wellington  
Andover at Andover Central  
Kingman at Circle  
Clearwater at Ulysses