

# Cats Make Memories

Homecoming is often about memories. The Mulvane High School football team should have some good memories about this year's game against Circle Friday night, Sept. 30, at Lyle Couch Field.

After trailing early, the Wildcats got their offense going to take the lead, then the defense made several big plays in the second half on the way to a 29-7 victory. Mulvane improved to 3-2 overall on the season.

"It's always great to win on Homecoming night," said Wildcat head coach Dave Fennewald. "I always tell the senior players that there are two games they'll remember the most, and those are Homecoming and their final game. It's always better to win those games. This was one of our best team performances of the season."

It didn't start out that way. Circle got on the board first, thanks to a 40-yard touchdown pass from quarterback Christian Trotter to wideout Ryan Mills late in the first quarter. The Wildcats responded quickly after that, scoring on their next possession. Quarterback Ryan Herrig finished a long drive with a six-yard scoring pass to John Knight to tie the game at 7-7.

"Circle threw a defense at us that they hadn't shown on tape," said Fennewald. "They were geared toward stopping our outside running game, which is where we've had most of our success this year. We had to make some adjustments on the fly, and we started running more between the tackles."

That meant more of senior fullback Caleb NeSmith. With just over two minutes left in the half, NeSmith took a quick handoff up the middle and broke loose for a 27-yard TD run to give Mulvane its first lead, 14-7. "That's just reading the play on the triple option," said Fennewald. "That puts a lot on Ryan because he's got to make those decisions quickly on who's getting the ball on each play. Circle was keying on John Knight, Sage Swaney, and even Ryan, so Ryan started reading that and gave the ball more to Caleb."

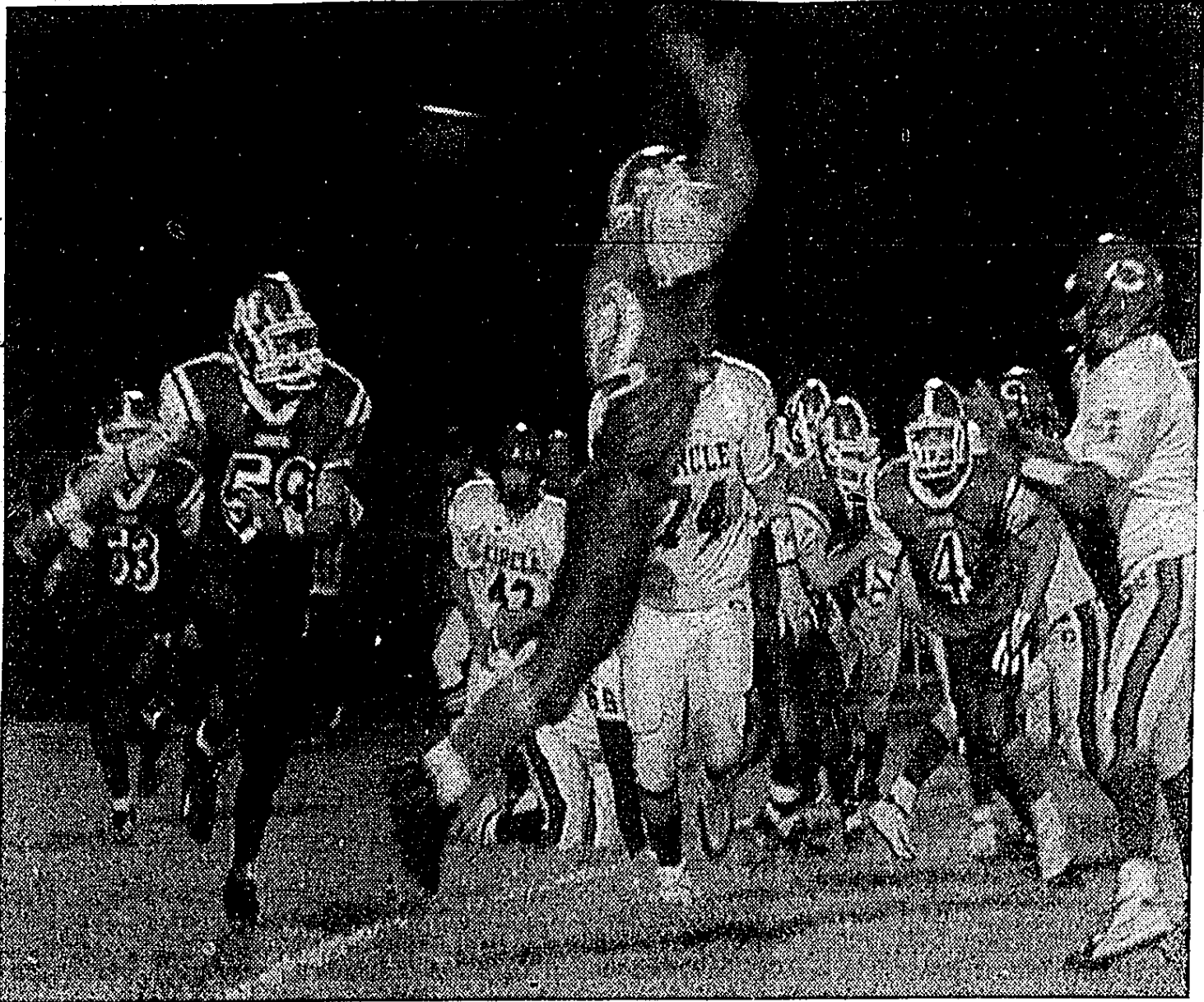
The second half was more about Mulvane's defense, especially the first series of the second half. Circle drove the field until they had second-and-goal inside the Mulvane 2-yard line. Knight made a tackle for a one-yard loss, then Andrew Myers stuffed another running play for a two-yard loss on third down. On fourth down from the 5, Chad Blackwell pressured Trotter on a pass attempt, and Knight knocked the pass down. "I think that took a lot of the wind out of their sails," said Fennewald.

Even so, the score was still 14-7 going to the fourth quarter. Then, senior linebacker Brit Ericson intercepted a T-Bird pass in Mulvane territory and returned it 50 yards to the Circle 25. Five plays later, Knight scored from 10 yards out for a 21-7 lead. Just over three minutes later, following a fumble recovery by Andrew Myers, Herrig hit Knight again on a screen pass for a 26-yard score. Tyler Oblinger ran in the two-point conversion for the final points of the game.

"Everybody on defense really did their job," said Fennewald. "The defensive line understands that their job is to stand their ground and let the linebackers make plays. Our secondary played well against the pass, and we forced four turnovers."

The linebackers, senior Ericson and freshman Huldson Tharp, were making plays. Ericson was in on a jaw-dropping 27 tackles, and Tharp was in on a nearly-as-impressive 21 stops. Knight added a pair of interceptions. "I'm not sure if we've kept tackling records at Mulvane, but if not, we're going to start," said Fennewald. "Brit and Huldson really have good instincts to play linebacker. They really complement each other on the field."

NeSmith, meanwhile, had a great night in more ways than one. Not only did he rush 13 times for 100 yards (his first 100-yard rushing game), but he was also named Homecoming King at halftime. All of this after seemingly



Wildcat Sage Swaney (22) hangs on as Brit Ericson (4) and Andrew Myers (58) race in to help down a T-Bird runner

injuring his arm on the opening kickoff return. "It's most likely a sprained elbow," said Fennewald. "But that is one tough kid. He's really taken a leadership role on this team. We also got a great game from the

offensive line, including Chad Hansen, who did a great job clearing out their linebackers."

Herrig ran for 56 yards on eight carries and was 8-for-10 passing for 97 yards and two touchdowns with no interceptions.

Knight had six catches for 80 yards and 33 yards rushing on seven carries.

The Wildcats are back on the road this week. Mulvane will play at El Dorado Friday night, Oct. 7, starting at 7 p.m.

Circle	7	0	0	0-7
Mulvane	0	14	0	15-29

#### Scoring

Touchdowns—Circle: Ryan Mills (40, pass from Christian Trotter). Mulvane: John Knight 3 (10, run; 6, 26, passes from Ryan Herrig), Caleb NeSmith (27, run).

Points after touchdowns—Circle: Andrew Gaylor (kick). Mulvane: Brit Ericson 3 (kicks), Tyler Oblinger 2 (run).

#### TEAM STATISTICS

	Circle	Mulvane
First Downs	11	10
Rushing Yards	45	202
Passing Yards	160	97
Total Offense	205	299
Pass Completions	13	8
Pass Attempts	22	10
Passes Intercepted	3	0
Fumbles Lost	1	1
Punts/Average	3/35	3/33
Penalties/Yards	4/37	7/69

#### INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

##### Rushing

Circle—Jordan Schowalter 12 carries-39 yards, Christian Trotter 13-12, Kendall Pierce 12-2, Ryan Mills 1-(minus 3). Mulvane—Caleb NeSmith 13-100, Ryan Herrig 8-6, John Knight 7-33, Sage Swaney 4-4, Quinton Smith 2-9.

##### Passing

Circle—Christian Trotter 13 completions-22 attempts-160 yards-3 INT-1 TD. Mulvane—Ryan Herrig 8-10-97-0-2.

##### Receiving

Circle—Matt Wood 6 receptions-55 yards, Grant Berry 3-35, Ryan Mills 2-41, Jordan Schowalter 1-21, Kamren Reilly 1-8. Mulvane—John Knight 6-80, Tyler Oblinger 1-10, Caleb NeSmith 1-7.

#### DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

Brit Ericson 3 tackles-24 assists, Huldson Tharp 2-19, Syler Swaney 3-7, Caleb NeSmith 1-9, Andrew Myers 1-7, Matt Carden 1-5, Sage Swaney 1-5, John Knight 1-4, Kyle Womacks 1-4, Tyler Oblinger 1-3, Chad Blackwell 1-3, Jacob Parker 1-1, Chad Hansen 0-2, Levi Hein 0-1, Jacob Hatfield 0-1, Quinton Smith 0-1, Jesso Pierce 0-1.

Fumble recovery—Andrew Myers.

Interceptions—John Knight 2, Brit Ericson.

QB Sacks—Kyle Womacks, Huldson Tharp.

#### AVCTL III-IV

#### Football Standings

##### Division III

Team	League		Overall	
	W	L	W	L
Augusta	4	0	4	1
Wellington	2	0	5	0
Rose Hill	1	1	4	1
Mulvane	1	1	3	2
El Dorado	1	3	1	4
Buhler	0	4	0	5