



Wildcat runner John Knight (21) tries to break free during a run against Rose Hill in Friday's District 10 game

'Sudden Death' Tonight

Second Half Swoon Sinks Wildcat Hopes

The Mulvane High School football team played three even quarters with a very strong Rose Hill team at Mulvane Friday night, Oct. 21, on Senior Parents' Night.

Of course, football games generally last four quarters.

After leading by one point at halftime, the Wildcats suffered through a 23-0 deficit in the third quarter and went on to lose to Rose Hill, 43-22. Rose Hill (7-1) clinched first place in Class 4A-District 10 while the Wildcats (1-1 district, 2-2 AVCTL Division III, 5-3 overall) head into a must-win situation in their district finale at Wellington.

"We just didn't have the same intensity in the third quarter that we did in the first half," said Wildcat head coach Dave Fennewald. "Each possession we had in the third quarter, we committed some kind of major penalty, and it would stop our drive. We didn't have many offensive snaps in the second half because they controlled the ball, and we couldn't make a stop on defense. We played at such a high energy level in the first half,

and I was concerned about keeping it up for a full 48 minutes, and it didn't happen."

Things started out well for the Wildcats. Rose Hill's opening drive, which lasted over half of the first quarter, ended with a defensive stop and the ball turning over downs. On Mulvane's second play from scrimmage, quarterback Ryan Herrig found running room over the right side and broke free for a 65-yard touchdown run, giving the Wildcats a quick 7-0 lead.

"We tried to mix up our option a little," said Fennewald. "We ran more plays in the opposite direction of our motion man. That play was just an example of that."

Rose Hill came back on their next possession, tying the game on a six-yard run by Josh Haydon. Early in the second quarter, 'Cat linebackers Brit Ericson and Huldson Tharp combined on a sack, forcing a fumble, with Ericson recovering in Rocket territory. That set up a three-yard TD run by Sage Swaney, which gave Mulvane the lead back, 14-7.

Rose Hill answered again about four minutes later, with Haydon scoring again from eight yards out. The extra point was blocked by Kyle Womacks, keeping Mulvane in the lead, 14-13. Mulvane took that lead into the locker room at halftime. "We really felt we were going to win the game at that point," said Fennewald. "Our kids had been doing everything we'd asked of them. Our offense

was taking was their defense was giving us, and our defense was making some big plays."

Mulvane got the ball first in the second half and drove down to the Rose Hill 36, but a holding penalty helped stall the drive, resulting in a punt. On Rose Hill's next possession, on third-and-7, Rocket quarterback Brayden Crowe completed a 42-yard pass to Trent Ubben deep into Mulvane territory. Haydon later scored from four yards out, and the two-point conversion gave the Rockets a 21-14 edge.

"Once they got that big completion, it was almost like you could hear the air coming out," said Fennewald. "We had some chances to stay in the game, but once the momentum starting getting away from us, it just snowballed from there."

A dead-ball unsportsmanlike-conduct penalty helped stop Mulvane's next drive, forcing another punt. The Rockets took the ball down the field again, with Haydon scoring from 11 yards out for his fourth TD of the game, making it 29-14 with the two-point conversion.

Then came the real back-breaker. After a Mulvane three-and-out, Crowe rolled out and found tight end B.J. Nussbaum for a 56-yard scoring pass down the Mulvane sideline, and the 'Cats were suddenly down 36-14 after three quarters. "Rose Hill has a lot of team speed and very physical linemen up front," said Fennewald. "Give them credit, they turned it up in the second half, and we didn't stay with them."

Herrig finished with 10 carries for 94 yards rushing while senior fullback Caleb NeSmith added 11 carries for 59 yards. Herrig was also 5-for-9 passing for 85 yards. Three of his completions were to John Knight for 65 yards. Jacob Hatfield had one catch for 11 yards while Ericson had one for nine yards. On defense, Tharp and NeSmith were each in on 16 tackles while Ericson and Sage Swaney had 14 each. Syler Swaney had 10 tackles while Knight added nine.

The Wildcats are now in a winner-take-all situation for District 10's second playoff spot. Mulvane travels to Wellington tonight (Oct. 27), with the winner taking second place in the district and a playoff spot. The kickoff for tonight's game is set for 7 p.m. The Class 4A playoffs begin Tuesday, Nov. 1.

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|-----------|---|---|----|------|
| Rose Hill | 7 | 6 | 23 | 7-43 |
| Mulvane | 7 | 7 | 0 | 8-22 |

Scoring

Touchdowns—Rose Hill: Josh Haydon 4 (6, 8, 4, 11, runs), Brayden Crowe (1, run), B.J. Nussbaum (56, pass from Crowe). Mulvane: Ryan Herrig 2 (65, 2, runs), Sage Swaney (3, run)

Points after touchdowns—Rose Hill: Will Peppard 3 (kicks), Josh Haydon 2 (pass from Crowe), B.J. Nussbaum 2 (pass from Crowe). Mulvane: Brit Ericson 2 (kicks), Ryan Herrig 2 (run).

TEAM STATISTICS

| | Rose Hill | Mulvane |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| First Downs | 16 | 7 |
| Rushing Yards | 282 | 164 |
| Passing Yards | 147 | 85 |
| Total Offense | 429 | 249 |
| Pass Completions | 6 | 5 |
| Pass Attempts | 12 | 9 |
| Passes Intercepted | 0 | 0 |
| Fumbles Lost | 1 | 1 |
| Punts/Average | 1/20 | 7/34.4 |
| Penalties/Yards | 6/47 | 4/40 |

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing

Rose Hill—Josh Haydon 29 carries-173 yards, Aaron Hynick 16-101, Trent Ubben 1-6, Tommy Rhodenbaugh 2-3, Eric Page 1-2, Jared Hensley 1-1, Jake Haydon 4-0, Chase Orban 1-(minus 1), Brayden Crowe 4-(minus 3). Mulvane—Ryan Herrig 10-94, Caleb NeSmith 11-59, Sage Swaney 4-12, John Knight 3-(minus 1).

Passing

Rose Hill—Brayden Crowe 6 completions-12 attempts-147 yards-0 INT-1 TD. Mulvane—Ryan Herrig 5-9-85-0-0.

Receiving

Rose Hill—B.J. Nussbaum 1 reception-56 yards, Trent Ubben 1-42, Aaron Hynick 1-32, Ryan Roy 1-13, Josh Haydon 2-4. Mulvane—John Knight 3-65, Jacob Hatfield 1-11, Brit Ericson 1-9.

DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

Huldson Tharp 1 tackle-15 assists, Caleb NeSmith 8-8, Brit Ericson 2-12, Sage Swaney 5-9, Syler Swaney 4-6, John Knight 2-7, Ryan Herrig 3-4, Andrew Myers 0-7, Matt Carden 2-4, Chad Blackwell 0-4, Kyle Womacks 0-4, Jacob Hatfield 0-2, Chad Hansen 0-2, Austin Stevens 0-1, Albert Hixson 0-1.

Fumble recovery—Brit Ericson.

QB Sack—Brit Ericson, Huldson Tharp.

Blocked PAT—Kyle Womacks.