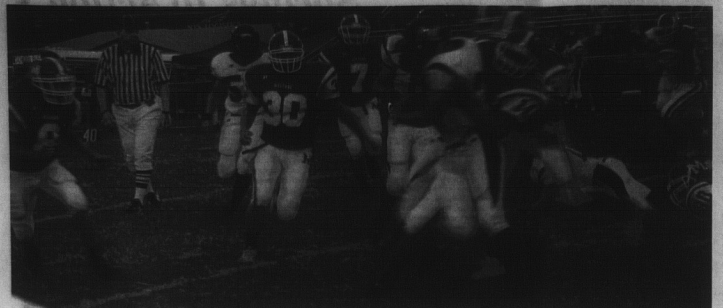
Now, It's A Streak Of One



Mulvane junior Albert Hixson (11) brings down a Hornet runner as teammates Syler Swaney (8), Jesse Pierce (30) and Tyler Oblinger (7) move in to help

Mulvane Sports

It wasn't the most dramatic way to end a 16-game losing streak, but who needs drama anyway?

The Mulvane High School football team defeated Valley Center for the first time since 1985 Friday night, Sept. 8, winning 42-12 in Mulvane to improve to 2-0 on the season. The Hornets had won 16 straight meetings from 1986 to 2001, but the teams hadn't met since then.

"It wasn't the only motivating factor, but it was a big one," said Wildcat head coach Dave Fennewald. "We had the scores of those games posted on our board all week. The funny thing is that some of these kids weren't even born when the streak started. Still, the guys all understood how important it was to win this game. It's even better because we had several players sick during the week. Everybody else picked up their teammates, though, and they accepted the challenge."

Mulvane seemed to have very little trouble moving the football in the first half. The Wildcats seemed to start every possession near or across midfield. The 'Cats went downfield on their first drive, which ended with an 18-yard touchdown pass from Ryan Herrig to John Knight. Soon after that, the "Holdon Tharp Show" began.

A short Hornet punt set up Mulvane's second score, a 15-yard run up the middle by Tharp. The extra point was no good, but the Wildcats were up, 13-0. Later in the first quarter, an interception by Herrig set the 'Cats up in Valley Center territory. Mulvane scored very quickly, with the sophomore Tharp breaking loose on a 41-yard scoring run. On the conversion, holder Tyler Oblinger pitched to Tharp, who rolled out and threw to Levi Hein in the end zone for two points, giving the Wildcats a 21-0 lead by the end of the quarter.

The second quarter provided much of the same, to the delight of the home crowd. On the Wildcats' fourth possession, a pair of completions from Herrig to Aaron Elston set up Tharp's third score, this one from six yards out, and Kyle Ericson's extra point made the score 28-0. On the first play of Mulvane's next possession, Knight went in motion, took a pitch from Herrig over the left side, and ran nearly untouched for a 53-yard TD, giving the Wildcats a 35-0 halftime lead.

Valley Center	0	0	6	6—12
Mulvane	21	14	7	0—42

Scoring

Touchdowns—Valley Center: Hodges (35, fumble return), Griffin (1, run). Mulvane: Holdon Tharp 4 (15, 41, 6, runs; 97, kickoff return), John Knight 2 (53, run; 18, pass from Ryan Herrig).

Points after touchdowns—Mulvane: Kyle Ericson 4 (kicks), Levi Hein 2 (pass from Holdon Tharp).

TEAM STATISTICS

	Valley Center	Mulvane
First Downs	5	12
Rushing Yards	73	283
Passing Yards	83	79
Total Offense	156	362
Pass Completions	8	7
Pass Attempts	15	9
Passes Intercepted	2	0
Fumbles Lost	1	1
Penalties/Yards	9/49	13/60
Punts/Average	6/33	3/38

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing

Valley Center—Griffin 30 carries-60 yards, Fisher 3-7, McLain 4-6. Mulvane—Holdon Tharp 17-134, John Knight 4-76, Ryan Herrig 3-26, Chad Blackwell 2-10, Tyler Oblinger 1-12, Chris Stang 6-15, Tyler Springer 1-10.

Passing

Valley Center—Nordstedt 6 completions-11 attempts-12 yards-1 INT-0 TD, Fisher 2-4-71-1-0. Mulvane—Ryan Herrig 5-6-56-0-2, Jordan Gesch 2-3-23-0-0.

Receiving

Valley Center—Griffin 4 receptions-46 yards, Blair 2-31, Tormey 1-3. Dunning 1-3. Mulvane—Mitchell Simon 3-23, John Knight 2-19, Aaron Elston 2-14, Jesse Pierce 1-23.

DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

Holdon Tharp 2 tackles-14 assists, Syler Swaney 2-10, Albert Hixon 0-9, Jesse Pierce 4-4, Tyler Oblinger 0-4, Levi Hein 1-3, John Knight 1-3, Mitchell Simon 0-3, William Bird 0-3, Danny Schneider 0-3, Ryan Herrig 1-1, Jacob Snider 1-1, Kyle Ericson 1-1, Matt Carden 1-1, Kyle Adams 0-2, Phil Bartlett 0-2, Tyler Springer 0-1, Chad Blackwell 1-0, Andrew Myers 1-0, Mike Gutzmer 0-1.

Interception—Ryan Herrig, Tyler Oblinger.

Fumble recovery—Albert Hixson.

Blocked kick—Matt Carden.

QB Sack—Levi Hein, Chad Blackwell.

"I don't remember the last time we played a first half like that," said Fennewald. "We played so well in all areas of the game. We put up 35 points, we had just two penalties, we didn't have a single negative play on offense, and we held them to one first down. It also gave us a chance to give our reserves some playing time in the second half."

Fennewald gave the reserves plenty of playing time in the second half, and they played well after an early rough patch. An errant shotgun snap resulted in a defensive touchdown for Valley, making the score 35-6. Any letdown was quickly erased by Tharp, who took the ensuing kickoff at the 3, ran straight ahead, and didn't stop until he had a 97-yard TD return for his fourth score of the game. A fourth-quarter Hornet TD provided the final points of the game.

Tharp carried the ball 17 times for 134 yards while Knight added 76 yards on only four carries. Herrig was 5-for-6 passing for 56 yards and a score, and backup Jordan Gesch was 2-for-3 for 23 yards. Knight, Elston, and Mitchell Simon each had a pair of receptions, and tight end Jesse Pierce had Mulvane's longest reception of the night for 23 yards.

The Wildcat defense forced three turnovers, with interceptions by Herrig and Oblinger and a fumble recovery by Albert Hixson. Tharp was in on 16 tackles, Syler Swaney had 12 stops, Hixson had nine, Pierce had eight, and Oblinger and Hein had six apiece. Mulvane had 13 penalties, but 11 of them came in the second half.

"With our offense, you can't lock in on one guy," said Fennewald. "Someone different can have a big game every week. Our defense has been just flying to the ball so far. Our first-stringers haven't given up an offensive touchdown yet. We'll be seriously tested in the near future, but this team really has a chance to write its own history this season."

The Wildcats will travel to Buhler Friday night, Sept. 15, for an AVCTL III matchup. The opening kickoff is set for 7 p.m.

AVCT League Football Standings

DIVISION III

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

DIVISION IV

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

Last Week's Results

Mulvane 42, Valley Center 12
Rose Hill 21, Newton 14
Buhler 12, Wellington 8
Andover 36, Circle 17
Andale 49, Augusta 7
Kingman 31, El Dorado 18
Andover Central 21, Winfield 7
Conway Springs 34, Clearwater 13

Games Friday, Sept. 15

Mulvane at Buhler
Haven at Rose Hill
Clearwater at Andover
Augusta at El Dorado
Andover Central at Andale
Circle at Wellington
Garden Plain at Kingman