

FB Wildcats Stayed Cool; District Next

It was one of those Homecoming last-minute finishes that the Mulvane High School football team will never forget. Especially Chad Blackwell.

Blackwell's 11-yard touchdown reception with 28 seconds remaining gave the Wildcats a 28-23 Homecoming victory over Augusta Friday night, Oct. 6. Mulvane broke a two-game losing skid and improved to 3-2 in AVCTL Division III, 4-2 overall.

"That was a great high-school football game," said MHS head coach Dave Fennewald. "The crowd was great, both teams played great, and it was a great finish. I told the kids that the two games they'll remember most are their final game and Homecoming, and this one will be really memorable for these guys. It was a great environment."

The game started quickly for both teams. The Wildcats took the ball down the field on their opening possession, finishing the drive with a one-yard touchdown dive by Haldon Tharp, and Kyle Ericson's extra point put the 'Cats up early, 7-0. The visiting Orioles, however, were quick to answer, as tailback Tyler Nordman broke loose for a 61-yard TD romp to tie the score.

After that, the defenses began to take over the game. The score remained tied until late in the half, when Augusta put together another drive that ended with Nordman's three-yard TD run. The Orioles would take a 14-7 lead into the locker room at halftime.

"After we scored first, they came right back and punched us in the mouth, and we didn't react to that right away," said Fennewald. "We didn't do anything offensively the rest of the half, but our defense kept us in the game. We made some good adjustments at halftime on both sides of the ball, and we played a lot better."

The second half started much like the first half. Mulvane got the ball first, and it took them just over a minute to tie the game. After picking up a first down, Tharp busted up the middle for a 54-yard TD to make it 14-14. Once again, Augusta responded quickly with Nordman, who broke away for a 70-yard TD run just over a minute later, giving Augusta a 21-14 lead.

The Wildcats fired right back on their next possession, thanks to big runs from Tharp, John Knight, and Aaron Elston, and

Augusta	7	7	9	0-23
Mulvane	7	0	14	7-28

Scoring

Touchdowns—Augusta: Tyler Nordman 3 (61, 3, 70, runs). Mulvane: Haldon Tharp 3 (1, 54, 2, runs), Chad Blackwell (11, pass from Ryan Herrig).

Points after touchdowns—Augusta: Shawn Kuhlman 3 (kicks). Mulvane: Kyle Ericson 4 (kicks).

Safety—Augusta (punt snap out of end zone).

TEAM STATISTICS

	Augusta	Mulvane
First Downs	11	17
Rushing Yards	275	219
Passing Yards	62	48
Total Offense	337	267
Pass Completions	3	6
Pass Attempts	10	9
Passes Intercepted	1	0
Fumbles Lost	1	0
Penalties/Yards	2/20	5/25
Punts/Average	4/26.2	5/30.8

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

Rushing

Augusta—Tyler Nordman 16 carries-191 yards, Casey Burden 8-36, Corbin Reichard 6-23, Chris Stuart 7-23, Potts 1-2. Mulvane—Haldon Tharp 22-148, Aaron Elston 5-36, John Knight 4-25, Tyler Oblinger 1-5, Ryan Herrig 11-5.

Passing

Augusta—Casey Burden 3 completions-9 attempts-62 yards-1 INT-0 TD, Brek Train 0-1-0-0-0. Mulvane—Ryan Herrig 6-9-48-0-0.

Receiving

Augusta—Gilmour 1 reception-32 yards, Chris Stuart 1-22, Tyler Nordman 1-8. Mulvane—John Knight 4-27, Chad Blackwell 1-11, Aaron Elston 1-10.

DEFENSIVE STATISTICS

Haldon Tharp 2 tackles-14 assists, Tyler Sweeney 5-10, Tyler Oblinger 3-7, Albert Hixon 2-8, Jesse Pierce 0-8, John Knight 1-4, Andrew Myers 0-5, Kyle Ericson 0-4, Ryan Herrig 1-2, William Bird 0-3, Matt Carden 1-1, Quinton Smith 1-1, Tyler Springer 0-1, Danny Schneider 0-1.

Interception—Tyler Oblinger.

Fumble recovery—Tyler Sweeney.

Tharp scored his third touchdown from two yards out to tie the game once again. On Mulvane's next possession, however, the Wildcats were forced to punt, and the snap sailed over Ryan Herrig's head and out of the end zone for a safety, giving Augusta the lead back, 23-21, late in the quarter.

The defenses took over again in the fourth quarter. Midway through, the 'Cats drove to the Augusta 30, but a sack on third down for the 'Cats to punt. The Mulvane defense forced a quick three-and-out and got the ball back at the Augusta 49 with just over three minutes to play. That's when the drama started.

Tharp picked up a first down on an 11-yard run. Later in the drive, a 10-yard completion to Elston left the Wildcats with a fourth-and-3 at the Augusta 31. After a timeout, Herrig hit Knight for a first down to keep the drive going. Tharp carried twice for another first down at the 11. Finally, Herrig rolled left and found senior fullback Blackwell open in the flat, and Blackwell broke a tackle near the goal line and scored to give the Wildcats the lead.

It wasn't quite over yet. After a short kickoff, Augusta started around their own 40. A screen pass moved the ball to the Mulvane 35, but an incompletion with five seconds remaining left time for just one more play. Augusta's final Hail Mary was intercepted in a crowd by Tyler Oblinger, and the Homecoming postgame celebration began.

"Our guys stayed cool on that final drive," said Fennewald. "John got knocked down on that fourth-down play, but he and Ryan both stayed with the play and got the first down. Chad was wide open on a run-pass option play, and he beat the defender to the corner of the end zone."

Tharp had another strong game running the ball, gaining 148 yards on 22 carries, while Elston added 36 yards on five carries. Herrig was 6-for-9 passing for 48 yards, with the bulk of his yards coming in the fourth quarter. Knight finished four catches for 27 yards to go with the key fourth-quarter receptions by Elston and Blackwell.

AVCTL III-IV

Football Standings

DIVISION III

Team	League		Overall	
	W	L	W	L
Rose Hill	3	0	5	1
Andover	2	1	4	2
Augusta	2	1	3	3
Mulvane	3	2	4	2
Buhler	2	3	3	3
El Dorado	0	5	0	6

DIVISION IV

Andale	3	0	6	0
Wellington	4	1	4	2
Andover Central	3	2	4	2
Circle	2	3	2	4
Kingman	0	3	1	5
Clearwater	0	3	0	6

Last Week's Results

Mulvane 28, Augusta 23
 Andale 57, Circle 0
 Rose Hill 35, El Dorado 6
 Buhler 34, Andover 31
 Andover Central 41, Clearwater 7
 Wellington 41, Kingman 7

Games Friday, Oct. 13

Mulvane at Wellington
 Andover at Augusta
 Rose Hill at Andover Central
 Buhler at Haven
 Council Grove at El Dorado
 Circle at Chapman
 Clearwater at Andale
 Pratt at Kingman