

## Boys Play Double Overtime By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Bulldogs finished their season with an exciting double-overtime at the Grainfield Sub-State on March 3. The boys entered the tournament with an 11-10 record to face the Wheatland/Grinnell Thunderhawks. They had met the 'Hawks twice earlier the season, winning both games by close margins, one in overtime.

The 'Hawks held the lead at the end of the first 10-6. The Bulldogs fought their way back to gain a narrow 20-19 lead by half time. The 'Hawks knew their home floor advantage and pulled back ahead 31-28 to end the third.

The fourth quarter found both teams determined to advance in the tournament. Tristan Schwarz started the quarter off with a shot to help close the margin, but the 'Hawks answered. The Bulldogs worked the ball, but fell down by 10 with less than a minute and a half to play. It looked pretty dismal for the 'Dogs, but Grant Spresser didn't want to quit and fired off a quick five points. Schwarz made a three with .48 left on the clock and the 'Dogs were back to within 2.

The 'Hawks went to the free throw line, but missed their shots. The Bulldogs' Coach Mike Doll called a time out with 30 seconds to play. Senior Zach Spresser inbounded the ball to Grant Spresser who passed it off to Schwarz. Schwarz threw up a three but it missed and the Bulldogs sent the 'Hawks back to the line. They made their first, but missed their second shot to be up by three with 10 seconds remaining. Following another GP time out, Koi Wessel tossed the ball to Grant Spresser who hit a three with one second on the clock to sent the game into overtime with a 45-45 score. "I thought I was off when I put up the shot," said Spresser, "but fortunately it went in."

The Bulldogs got the tip for the overtime. Grant Spresser made a quick shot. The 'Hawks missed a shot and Schwarz rebounded the ball. Ryburn and Zach Spresser each made baskets and the Bulldogs held a 6 point lead. The Bulldog defense forced the 'Hawks to turn the ball over, but the 'Hawks stole the inbounds play for a score. The 'Hawks forced Grant Spresser to fumble the ball, but he held on and got fouled. He made both free throws, and the 'Hawks answered.

The 'Hawks quickly made another shot, along with an and one, but the Bulldogs were still up by three. Following two more free shots from the 'Hawks, Grant Spresser made a basket to maintain the three point lead with 16 seconds to play. The Bulldogs went to the free throw line with .03 on the clock but missed both shots. The 'Hawks called a full time out, grabbed the rebound and Thomas Heier tossed the ball up from well behind half court. The ball miraculously went through the hoop sending the game into a second overtime 55-55. "That was the luckiest shot I have ever seen!" exclaimed Grant Spresser.

The Bulldogs ran out of steam during the second overtime as the 'Hawks gained the lead and held on for the 72-59 win to advance in the Sub-State tournament.

Senior Grant Spresser scored a season high 18 points for the Bulldogs in his final game. Seniors Shane Ryburn scored 16, Tristan Schwarz scored 13, and Zach Spresser 2 in their final high school game. Koi Wessel added 8 and Kade Wessel 2. The Bulldogs finished their season with an exciting game, winning four of their last six games, and an 11-11 season record.

"I am very proud of everything the boys accomplished and overcame this year," said Head Coach Mike Doll. "We never gave up and twice this year we led amazing comebacks that won the game this year or extended the game for us." Doll added, "The never quit attitude is one I hope these boys carry on far beyond basketball. A season highlight for us is a 2nd place finish in the league standings. The seniors are a hard working group of kids I am very fortunate I was able to coach the last two years."