

Lady Bulldogs Take Third at Castle Rock

By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Lady Bulldogs placed third in the Castle Rock Tournament in Quinter last week with wins over Wheatland/Grinnell and Ellis. "We played very well considering it is one of the hardest tournaments around," said Maddy Walz-senior. "Win or lose, we learned something from every game that will help us build as a team. I am very proud of our third place finish." "I think we proved to a lot of people that we can go places," added senior Kynndra Rush. "If we keep our hard work and dedication with every game that we play, we can definitely achieve great things."

The girls opened the tournament on December 8 with a 47-28 win over the Thunderhawks of Wheatland/Grinnell. This was a rematch of the Bulldogs sub-state game at the end of last season that sent the 'Hawks to the state tournament and finished the Bulldogs' season. The Bulldogs had worked all summer and were ready to reclaim a victory over the 'Hawks.

The girls played steady and were patient as they waited for their shot while the 'Hawks put up repeated three-point attempts. Their patience paid off as the Bulldogs led 12-8 at the end of the first. The second quarter saw a slower-pace as the 'Dogs had trouble connecting their passes and the 'Hawks crept back in, but the 'Dogs held on to an 18-15 lead at half.

The Bulldogs picked it up in the third as they shot from the free-throw line and inside to extend their lead to 30-19 at the end of the third. The Hawks struggled with their offense in the fourth as the Bulldogs pulled ahead for the 47-28 win. Bulldog points came from Kynndra Rush-16, KayCee Miller-12, Gabrielle Schiltz-12, Kami Miller-3, Maddy Walz-2, and Kaylie Schaben-2. The girls outrebounded the 'Hawks 36-20 and had 8 assists and 6 steals for the win.

The semi-final game was played on Friday against the Hoxie Lady Indians. The Hoxie team has been on a multi-year winning streak, and are ranked first in the CatchItKansas preseason Division I poll having won the state title the past four years. The Bulldogs knew they would have to play their best game and were ready to test themselves. They took an early lead over the Indians, but the Indians quickly caught up and moved past for the 15-9 lead at the end of the first quarter.

The Bulldogs were not ready to back down and continued to fight for position as the Indians extended their lead to 32-16 by half time. The 'Dogs added another 11 in the third and 7 in the fourth, but the Indians couldn't miss as they won the game 62-34, eventually winning the tournament with a three point win over Dighton. Schiltz finished the game with 11 points. Kami Miller scored 9, Rush-5, KayCee Miller-5 and Walz-4. The Indians outrebounded the Bulldogs 25-14, but the 'Dogs had 8 assists and 7 steals during the game.

"This tournament showed us what we are capable of accomplishing," said Kami Miller-sr. "Although the score against Hoxie didn't show it, it was a good game. We broke their press very effectively. I am very proud of our team for the way we played overall in this tournament"

The Bulldogs claimed third place with a 59-51 win over Ellis on Saturday. The girls were ready to finish the tournament strong and get back to their winning ways as they came out ready to play. A buzzer shot by freshman KayCee Miller gave the 'Dogs a 10-7 lead at the end of the first. The Ellis Railroaders continued to work hard but the 'Dogs

outscored them by three in the second to hold a 28-22 lead with another exciting buzzer shot from Gabrielle Schiltz.

The ball went back and forth throughout the third, but six in a row by Rush helped the Bulldogs keep their lead. The girls finished strong with 19 points from both teams in the fourth as the Bulldogs held on for the 59-51 win.

Scoring for the win were KayCee Miller-17, Rush-15, Walz-12, Schiltz-9, Kami Miller-4, and Schaben-2. Both teams rebounded well with 35 grabbed by GP to Ellis's 37. The Bulldogs played well as a team with 17 assists and 11 steals.

"We played hard throughout the entire game." "Although we let Hoxie get in our heads, we learned to play tough," added Morgan Ritter, junior. "This was a pretty physical tournament." "We learned to finish the game," said junior Gabrielle Schiltz of the tournament.

"We gained experience and learned to play a more physical style game," said sophomore Maggi Nieman. "I'm proud of how our girls played as a team." "No matter the team, we can compete," added Schiltz. "This tournament not only showed the team, but the community, what we are made of," said KayCee Miller, freshman. "We worked hard and worked together well throughout each game. This tournament was very physical and it gave us good experience going into league play." The Bulldogs will play at home this Friday as they host league school Weskan. "I am very proud of our team," added KayCee. "Go 'Dogs!"