

Lady 'Dogs Place Second at Gove County Classic By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Lady Bulldogs placed runner-up at the Gove County Classic held in Grinnell/Wheatland on September 12. "This was our first tournament of the season," said junior Amber Erwin. "Everyone played great throughout the day."

The ladies started the day with three games of pool play. The first game of the day was against the Oberlin Lady Red Devils. The girls went back and forth to start the game leading to a 9-9 score early on. They stayed neck and neck for a couple more plays, but after a time out, senior Kami Miller stepped behind the line and served 12 in a row to give the Lady 'Dogs a big lead. Some strong spikes by Gabrielle Schiltz-junior, and rocket hits by Kyndra Rush-sr, put the 'Dogs up 22-13. The Lady Red Devils fought back but couldn't hold down the Bulldogs who won the set 25-15. A quick second set gave the Bulldogs their first match win of the day 25-7.

After a two game break, the second match of the pool was against the St. Francis Lady Indians. The Lady Bulldogs continued to play strong and defeated them in set 1 25-15. The Lady Indians rallied for the second set, but a 5-0 opening serve by Miller put the Lady 'Dogs in the lead. The Lady Indians closed the gap to 7-5 but Maddy Walz-sr assisted Schiltz as the 'Dogs pulled ahead 18-8. The Lady Indians went on a 5-0 run before Bulldogs Coach Orba Smith called a time out. Erwin served an ACE only to be answered by an ACE from the Indians. Good blocks from Erwin and Miller at the net helped the Bulldogs maintain their lead. The final two points came from a kill by Erwin and a final Erwin slam to give the Lady Bulldogs a second match win 25-17.

The final match of pool play was against the Cheylin Lady Cougars. The Lady Bulldogs continued to play together, hit well, and stick to the net as they won the first set 25-10. The second set saw many more excellent hits as the Lady Bulldogs dominated their pool defeating the Lady Cougars 25-13 to advance to the semi-finals undefeated.

In the semi-final match against the Lady Bulldogs from Quinter, the girls continued to control the game. "Compliments to the girls on their passing," added Erwin. "It led to some great hits!" The Lady 'Dogs won the semi-finals in two sets 25-12 and 25-18.

The championship game faced the Lady Bulldogs off with the Lady Thunderhawks of Wheatland/Grinnell. Both teams were undefeated on the day. Neither team had had more than 18 points scored on them by any team so it was bound to be a competitive championship match. The Lady Bulldogs struggled at the beginning of the first set and the Lady 'Hawks gained a comfortable spread 18-6. A GP timeout helped the girls regroup as they were able to gain a few more points but the Lady 'Hawks took the first set 25-12.

The Lady Bulldogs were not done for the day as they started the second set 2-0. The Lady 'Hawks tied it up 7-7 but an attack from Walz gave the 'Dogs a one point lead. "Although we were tired from the long day," said Rush, "we worked through it." The girls pulled ahead by four as the fatigue was evident in the Lady

'Hawks back to back missed serves. They reorganized and tied the game back up at 17 before the Lady 'Bulldogs surged ahead for the 25-21 win to send them into a third set.

The Lady "Hawks dominated the third set on their home floor. They gained a 6-0 lead to start. The Lady 'Dogs worked their way back in as both teams played great defensively. The girls continued to play to the very end finishing as runner-up with a 9-25 loss to the Lady 'Hawks.

"It was a great day for the Lady Bulldogs," concluded Erwin. "Our goal this season is to be the team people talk about. We are looking forward to a winning season." The Lady Bulldogs continued their season on Tuesday as they travelled to Almena to play Northern Valley and Victoria.