

Lady Bulldogs Post 19-4 Season By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Lady Bulldogs posted a 19-4 season as they finished the year as Runner-Up at the Grainfield Sub-State on March 4. The Lady Bulldogs have played in the Sub-State Championship game the past five years including the past two as champions going on to place 2nd and 3rd at state.

Their only losses this year went to teams who advanced to the state tournament including Wichita County-Leoti, who won the Class 2A Sub-State Championship in Syracuse, Quinter who won the Class 1A Division I Sub-State in Quinter, and Wallace County, who won the Class 1A Division II in Grainfield. The Lady Bulldogs had defeated Wallace County twice earlier in the season placing runner-up in the sub-state championship game.

The 9 girl team was led by seniors Breanna Rath and Sidney Taylor. Taylor was the top scorer on the team with 267 points. She also had 160 rebounds, 79 steals, and 48 assists. Rath pumped in 200 points this season, pulled down 52 rebounds, 81 steals, and 70 assists.

Junior Jordyn Fleckenstein poured in 207 points, had 116 rebounds, 37 assists, and 35 steals while junior Emma Weiner contributed 84 points, 110 rebounds, 68 assists, and 38 steals.

The sophomore girls all made successful contributions to the team's success. Anette Hernandez was the scoring leader in several games totaling 216 throughout the season. She led the team with 175 rebounds, and had 25 assists and 71 steals.

Coming off the bench, Hayden Wark finished the season with 64 points, 25 rebounds, 26 assists, and 15 steals. Siena Vargas added 8 points, 17 rebounds, 3 assists, and 3 steals while McKinzie Horobik totaled 25 points, 26 rebounds, and 4 steals. As a freshman, Anais Cepeda contributed 13 points, 19 rebounds, 10 assists, and 6 steals.

"This was by far my favorite season," said Rath. "I could not have asked for a better group of girls to spend my senior season with. I have a love/hate relationship with this sport, but I never knew how sad I would be to see it come to an end for me. I am so thankful for my coaches for believing in me when I did not believe in myself, and for my teammates for putting their trust in me as one of the senior leaders. I only got four years of Bulldog basketball, but a lifetime of memories."

"Although I am disappointed that we didn't make it back to state, I still enjoyed this season," added Taylor. "Coming out of junior season, I knew I was going to have to step up as a leader, and I believe Breanna and I both did this well. Looking back on the past three years with the team, we have always been able to accomplish so much. After being successful so many years, there was a lot of pressure on us all. But, as a team, we accomplished more than anyone thought we would. I am thankful for the team I got to play with this season and am proud of each of them. My coaches have taught me how to be a player and leader for the girls. Although I only get four years of Bulldogs basketball, they will always feel like family."

The team will graduate 2 seniors—Rath and Taylor—off their 9 member squad. Weiner and Fleckenstein will return as senior leaders next year as the girls hope to improve their number of players. Sophomores Hernandez, Wark, Vargas, and Horobik will step up as juniors as freshman Anais Cepeda welcomes the incoming group of freshmen. "We improved on working together this year," said Hernandez. "We're going to have a lot of new people coming in with the freshman class, but our seniors will help lead us to another successful season."