

Lady Bulldogs Place Runner-Up at Sub-State

By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Lady Bulldogs concluded their season as the Runner-Up at the Grainfield Sub-State on March 4. The girls received a bye in the quarterfinals, then defeated Dighton in the semi-finals to play in the championship game against Wallace County. They played a hard-fought, closely contested game on Saturday falling to the Wildcats 46-50.

The Bulldogs took control of the semi-final game against Dighton early on. With a last second buzzer shot from senior Sidney Taylor, the Dogs led 12-3 at the end of the first. The girls continued their historic aggressive defense in the second pulling ahead 25-10. With just 1.6 seconds until the half, the Hornets went to the free throw line, making both shots, to finish the half with a 25-12 Bulldog lead.

The Dogs had another great quarter in the third as they spent much of the time on the free throw line making 7 of their 8 free shots. A couple more baskets from Taylor put the Dogs up 36-17 going into the fourth including another buzzer shot from Taylor. The Lady Dogs slowed the pace a bit in the fourth only adding 6 points as the Lady Hornets put in 13. The Dogs held on for the 42-30 win and a spot in the championship game for the fifth year in a row.

Taylor finished the Dighton game with 20 points while Jordyn Fleckenstein added 11. Breanna Rath put in 8, Anette Hernandez 2, and Emma Weiner 1.

The Lady Bulldogs faced off with the Wallace County Wildcats for the championship. They two teams had played an aggressive, close game the week before and this matchup was just as physical and demanding on the girls. Junior Jordyn Fleckenstein opened the game for the Bulldogs only to have the Wildcats answer. The 'Cats pulled ahead 2-7 but the Dogs worked their way back into the game. A three points shot from Fleckenstein with just seconds on the clock tied the game up 9-9 at the end of the first.

Senior Breanna Rath hit a three to open the second but the Wildcats once again regained a slight lead. The Bulldogs were playing hard but fouls started to plague them. Taylor was on the bench with three just minutes before the half as the Wildcats edged ahead 21-17.

Back on the court to start the second half, Taylor received her fourth foul and was back on the bench. Rath hit another three to help narrow the spread. Trailing 26-32 midway through the quarter, Rath was hit with a fourth foul. She finished the quarter scoring her third three-pointer of the game but the Dogs trailed the Wildcats 31-40 going into the fourth.

Following a fourth quarter opening shot from Fleckenstein, Rath was out of the game with her 5th foul. The younger girls kept up the aggressive defense as Fleckenstein hit yet again bringing the game to within 5. Taylor was then removed from the game with her fifth foul and the Wildcats gained a 6 point lead. The younger girls knew that with both seniors on the bench, they had to step up their game and keep the pace as they had been training to do all season.

Fleckenstein added another basket and a couple free throws to bring the game to within three. Receiving her third foul with less than a minute to play, the Cats hit their free shots extending the lead to 5.

Sophomore Anette Hernandez closed the spread again but received her third foul as well. Sophomore Hayden Wark hit a three as she was falling to the floor to keep the game close. With less than 10 seconds remaining, the Wildcats hit two final free throws for the win 50-46.

Fleckenstein finished the game with 18 points while Breanna Rath added 9, Sidney Taylor 6, Anette Hernandez 6, Emma Weiner 4, and Hayden Wark 3. Hernandez led under the boards with 12 rebounds, along with Fleckenstein 5, Taylor 3, Weiner 2, Rath 1, and Wark 1.

Fleckenstein had 4 assists, Wark 3, Taylor 2, Rath 2, and Weiner 2. Rath grabbed 5 steals, Hernandez 4, Taylor 1, and Weiner 1.

“I was upset that I fouled out of the game,” said Rath, “but I was so proud to see how much the younger girls stepped up at the end. They never quit fighting and that is such a big part of being a Bulldog. We never give up. I am so proud of my team and the accomplishments we made this year. They were a joy to play with and I cannot wait to cheer them on next year.”