

Lady 'Dogs Are League Runner-Up By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Lady Bulldogs were named runner-up in the Western Kansas Liberty League for the second consecutive year. The Lady Bulldogs defeated Palco 48-20 in the quarterfinal round and won a close game with Logan 38-36 in the semifinals, but fell to Wheatland/Grinnell 29-33 in the championship game.

“We played outstanding defense throughout the tournament,” said Kami Miller. “We continue to improve each game.”

In the first round game against Palco, whom the Lady 'Dogs had defeated earlier in the season, the girls kept the game close throughout the first quarter ending with the Bulldogs holding a slight lead 9-8. The Lady 'Dogs went on a 5-0 run in the second quarter to pull ahead, but the Lady Roosters worked their way back into the game to close the spread to 18-14 by the half.

The Lady Bulldogs took control in the second half as they held the Lady Roosters to two points in the third and surged ahead 30-16. The Lady Roosters were unable to stop the Bulldogs momentum in the fourth as the game ended 48-20 allowing the Lady 'Dogs to advance to the semi-final round.

Points for the Lady Bulldogs came from Kami Miller-13, Gabrielle Schiltz-8, Maddy Walz-8, Kynndra Rush-6, Rachael Ritter-6, Amber Erwin-3, Maggi Nieman-2, Morgan Ritter-1, and Ana Bermudez-1. The Lady Bulldogs outrebounded the Lady Roosters 45-23 and had 10 assists and 13 steals.

The semifinal round on Friday promised to be an exciting game as the Lady Bulldogs were set to play the Logan Lady Trojans. The Trojans came out on top when the two teams met in January and the girls were ready to prove what they were made of.

This game was not going to be an easy set for either team. The Lady Trojans scored a three to start the game, but senior Rachael Ritter answered with a basket. Another basket by Kynndra Rush put the Lady 'Dogs on top 4-3 at the end of a defensive first quarter.

This set the rhythm for the remainder of the game as the girls traded baskets throughout the night. With the score tied at 17 with .18 seconds on the clock, the Lady Trojans sank a bucket at the buzzer to hold a slight lead at half time.

The Lady Trojans extended their lead in the third 19-27. Gabby Schiltz made a basket, but the girls missed several free throw opportunities before Coach Christensen called a time out. Back on the floor, the girls fired up with a couple of steals and baskets to close the gap to 25-29 by the end of the third.

The game was far from over as the Lady Bulldogs tied the score at 29 early in the fourth. Two free throws by Kami Miller gave the Lady 'Dogs their first lead of the game since the first quarter. Tough defense helped them gain a five-point spread as they held the Lady Trojans scoreless until just over two minutes to play in the game.

Rush hit a basket and two free throws to help maintain the lead with under a minute to play. Logan hit a three with 6.5 seconds remaining to finish the game with a Bulldog win 38-36. “We worked hard and worked as a team,” said Rachael Ritter. “We were able to keep their inside girls from making a lot of points.”

Kyndra Rush scored 14 points for the Lady Bulldogs along with Schiltz-11, Miller-6, R. Ritter-4, Walz-2, and Erwin-1. The Lady Trojans outrebounded the Bulldogs 36-23 but the 'Dogs had 9 assists and 9 steals for the win.

The championship game was against the Wheatland/Grinnell Lady Thunderhawks. These two teams had not yet met this season and they were more than ready to test each other out.

The game was close throughout the night as the girls were tied up at 8 by the end of the first. In a low scoring second quarter, the Lady 'Hawks pulled ahead 12-15 by the half. The Lady Bulldogs regrouped over the break and hit the floor determined to pull ahead—which they did 22-21 at the end of the third.

The fourth quarter was an intense contest as the 'Hawks pulled ahead by six with just over 4 minutes to play. Miller made two free throws for the Lady 'Dogs and R. Ritter added a basket to close the spread to two. The Lady 'Dogs stayed focused as their defense forced the Lady 'Hawks to throw the ball out of bounds. With just over a minute to play the Lady 'Hawks still led 26-28.

The game became a free throw shooting contest as the girls fouled each other in an attempt to regain control of the ball. Wheatland finished the game with a final score and the win 29-33.

Points for the Lady Bulldogs were attributed to Erwin-6, Schiltz-6, Rush-5, Miller-4, R. Ritter-4, and Walz-4. The Bulldogs pulled down 24 rebound to the Thunderhawks 13 and helped their teammates with 11 assists.

“Although we worked well together,” added Rush, “we need to make sure we start strong at the beginning of the game and not wait until the second half as the season progresses.” The Lady Bulldogs return to their regular season with an 11-4 record with a trip to Hill City on Tuesday and host Healy on Friday.