

Bulldogs Win One at League

By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Bulldog basketball team claimed one win at the WKLL tournament in three games played at the Colby Event Center the week of February 1-5. The Dogs, ranked 6 in the tournament, lost to third seed Logan/Palco 23-70 on Tuesday, won over Western Plains/Healy 57-39 on Friday, and fell to Triplains/Brewster 34-70 on Saturday. "It was good to get another win," said senior Ashton Schiltz.

The Bulldogs opened the tournament with Logan/Palco on Tuesday. They had lost to the Trojans earlier in the season and knew they had a battle ahead of them. Logan opened the game with a 22-0 run before the Dogs scored a basket from senior Fabian Cepeda late in the first. Once they found the basket, the Dogs added another 7 in the second as the Trojans put in 14 more for the 38-9 half time lead.

The Dogs continued to work hard but shots just wouldn't fall as they added 5 in the third and finished with 9 in the fourth. The Trojans added 8 in the third but finished with another 24 in the fourth for the 70-23 win. Cepeda led the Dogs with 9 points along with 4 apiece from Alex Gonzalez, Roberto Loya, and Abe Taylor. The final 2 came from Will Bruggeman.

Advancing to the consolation side of the bracket, the Dogs faced the Western Plains/Healy Bobcats on Friday. The Dogs had won over the Bobcats earlier by 10 and knew they would have to work hard. The Bobcats took an early 6-0 lead before the Dogs got on the boards with a 3 from senior Ethan Shea. Ashton Schiltz and Roberto Loya hit some shots to give the Dogs a 9-6 lead at the end of the first.

The Bulldogs, bolstered by their lead, pushed hard in the second as Cepeda went on a 7 point run. Senior Ethan Weiner took to the floor and pumped in two quick threes giving the Dogs a 22-8 lead. Ashton Schiltz, who shot 100% on free throws in the tournament, hit a couple shots and a three from freshman Josh Rath extended the Bulldog lead 27-10. Another shot from Weiner and a late-quarter bucket from Gonzalez gave the Dogs a 30-13 half time lead.

The Dogs came back in the second half ready to finish with the win as they distributed the ball around the floor to add another 13 to the Bobcats 11 in the third. The Bobcats didn't go down without a fight as they outscored the Dogs 15-14 in the fourth but the Dogs held on for the 57-39 win. "We played pretty good as a team against Western Plains/Healy," said Rath, "more as a team." "It was good that we were able to beat them again," added Fabian Cepeda.

Gonzalez led the Dogs with 15 points—most coming in the second half, along with 14 from Cepeda. Weiner and Shea each contributed 7, Schiltz 6, Loya 5, and Rath 3.

The Dogs final game of the tournament on Saturday was against the Triplains/Brewster Titans. The Titans and the Bulldogs traded baskets early in the game but the Titans pulled ahead 19-11 by the end of the first. The Titans took over in the second to put in 20 points holding the Dogs to 6 for a 39-17 half time lead.

The Dogs came back in the third to add 11 points—with 9 of them coming from behind the arc as the Titans pumped in 21. The Dogs finished the game with another 6 while the Titans added 10 for the 70-34 win. Rath led the Bulldogs with 11 points—9 from the three-point line, while Cepeda added 8, Gonzalez 5, Schiltz 4, Shea 3, and Taylor 3.

"I've been working on my 3-point shot," continued Rath, "but it was more opportunity and luck than anything. I hope to see more time on the floor." "We need to make sure we take care of the ball and work hard on defense," added Alex Gonzalez. "We do appreciate all those who supported us at the tournament. We hope to add a few more wins before the season ends."

The Bulldogs, with a 3-9 record, return to their regular season as they travel to Hill City on February 8.