

GP Girls Runner-up at League  
By Breanna Rath

The Golden Plains High School volleyball team placed second at the WKLL Tournament in Brewster on October 16. Going into the tournament seeded first with a 34-6 record, the Bulldogs were the team to beat in this 7-team round robin format. The Bulldogs took on the Weskan Coyotes, Wheatland/Grinnell Thunderhawks, Western Plains/Healy Bobcats, Triplains/Brewster Titans, Northern Valley Huskies, and the Logan/Palco Trojans to play a total of six games. They finished the day 5-1 to take home 2nd place, only falling to the Thunderhawks. "I am very proud of my team," said senior Rayna Taylor. "We are all excited to see how we will do in the postseason."

Having played the Coyotes one time in the regular season, the Dogs were determined to take another win. They started the day off strong with a 25-11 win in both sets. Halfway through the first set, Junior Breanna Rath had a five-serve run leaving the Coyotes in the dust 19-8. Good defense at the net by Seniors Kassie Miller and Carli Neiman followed by an attack kill from Morgan Wark finished the first set. To start the second set, the Coyotes came out strong with a 4-0 lead over the Bulldogs. After a quick time-out the Bulldogs came together and Rath pulled out another six-serve run. With several attack kills by sophomore Jordyn Fleckenstein and Wark, the Bulldogs took the win. "We played well and set the tone for the rest of the day," said Fleckenstein. "We got to focus more on fundamentals and use some things we do in practice."

Setting the energy for the day, the Bulldogs came to face their biggest rivals, the Wheatland/Grinnell Thunderhawks. The two teams had faced each other three times in regular season, with the Hawks falling to the Dogs every time. The Thunderhawks were there to win. The Bulldogs trailed the Thunderhawks all of the first set and had a tough loss of 15-25. Angered and full of determination, the Dogs came to play in the second set. There were several long rallies as both teams fought tooth and nail for the ball. The Bulldogs played tough defense and attacked the ball hard, which led to their 27-25 win. Just like every time before, this game went to three sets. Serving the ball well, the Bulldogs led 8-6 before losing the ball to the Thunderhawks. After a cross-court kill by Neiman, the Bulldogs gained some energy. Still battling closely, the ball went back and forth. Neiman was on fire with several kills but it wasn't quite enough. The Bulldogs fell to the Thunderhawks 17-25. This was their first loss to the Hawks all season. "It's always a battle when we match up with them," said Miller. "Four times is a lot to play a team, but we are ready for the fifth at sub-state."

Even after a loss, the Bulldogs did not get down as they took on the Western Plains/Healy Bobcats for their third match of the day. This was a quick two-set game with the Dogs winning the first set 25-8 and the second set 25-13. They then faced Triplains/Brewster. This was also a quick game. After running the score up 13-7, freshman Hayden Wark came in and had a four-serve run. The Dogs won the first set 25-11 and the second set 25-9.

The 5th game of the day for the Bulldogs was against the Northern Valley Huskies. Since the Huskies had taken the Dogs to three sets both times they played in the regular season, Golden Plains was determined to beat them in two. The Bulldogs took off with several attack kills from freshman Annette Hernandez-Lopez and a five-serve run from Fleckenstein halfway through the first set. It ended in favor of the Bulldogs 25-17.

The second set stayed close in score until Miller had a five-serve run to win the game 25-19.

After a long day of volleyball, the Bulldogs still had energy for one last game against the Logan/Palco Trojans. The Dogs served the ball very well as several players had good runs. The ball was attacked evenly throughout the team and the final score of the first set was 25-16. Eager to be done in two sets, the Dogs played hard but the Trojans stayed right with them. Tough competition on both sides of the net kept the score close. After attack kills from Neiman, Wark, Miller, and Fleckenstein, the Bulldogs claimed the 25-17 victory.

“I thought we had a really great tournament,” said Neiman. “We ended the day on a positive note which I think will help us going into sub-state.” The Golden Plains Lady Bulldogs will compete in Sub-State on Saturday, October 23 in Wheatland.