

## Bulldogs Win One at League

By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Bulldog basketball team won one game of their four played at the Western Kansas Liberty League tournament held in Grinnell and Colby February 1-7. The Dogs defeated Palco in the play-in game but, plagued by illness and injury, lost to Logan, Weskan, and Western Plains/Healy the remainder of the week.

The Bulldogs entered the tournament on February 1 as they travelled to Grinnell to play against Palco in the play-in game. They knew they had to win this game to continue and they worked together to accomplish that goal. Short one player from an injury the night before the boys stepped on the court ready to play. They opened with a 8-0 lead in the first with shots from seniors Harley Weese and Jaime Infante along with a basket from junior Wade Rush. The Palco Roosters came to play and closed the spread to 10-8 but the Bulldogs pulled ahead with baskets from sophomores Ashton Schiltz and Fabian Cepeda to lead 15-11 at the end of the quarter.

Weese and Rush extended the lead early in the second but six straight points from Schiltz gave the Dogs a 12 point lead. Junior Rojelio Loya added four more to end the first half with a 29-13 Bulldog lead.

The Roosters weren't about to make it easy for Golden Plains as they popped in six three pointers in the third quarter to bring game to within one toward the end of the quarter but the Bulldogs held on to their lead 39-35 with a late quarter three from Rush.

The Bulldogs renewed their efforts under the basket with shots from Weese, Rush, Roberto and Rojelio Loya, Schiltz, and Cepeda to finish the game with an additional 25. The Roosters added 12 as the Dogs claimed their second win of the season 64-47. Weese led the team scoring with 21 points while Rush added 13. Schiltz put in 10—a career high in a varsity game, Rojelio Loya 9, Cepeda 5, Jaime Infante 4, and Roberto Loya 2. “It was good to get the win to allow us to continue in the tournament,” said Schiltz.

They played Logan for the quarterfinal game on Monday, February 3. The Bulldogs could not get any offense going in the first quarter as they fell behind 0-15. “We had to make adjustments with some players out sick,” said Austin Patmon. “We played better once we adjusted.” With baskets from Weese, Austin Patmon, Schiltz, and Infante, the Bulldogs managed 10 points in the second. Logan added 16 for a 31-10 half time lead.

The Bulldogs outscored the Trojans 9-6 in the third but the Trojans came back in the fourth with 13 while the Dogs only put in 10 giving the Trojans a 50-29 lead. Golden Plains points came from Weese 15, Patmon 5, Jaime Infante 5, Schiltz 2, and Jovanny Infante 2.

The Bulldogs played Weskan on the consolation side of the bracket on Tuesday, February 4, in Grinnell. The Coyotes grabbed the early lead but sophomore Fabian Cepeda finally got the Dogs on the boards. Weese added a couple of shots but the Coyotes pulled ahead by 10 16-6. Cepeda ended the quarter with back to back threes to make it a four point game 16-12.

The Bulldogs added another 8 in the second as the Coyotes put in 17 for a 33-20 half time score. The Coyotes came out in the third to add 11 while the Bulldogs put in 10. The Dogs finished with 10 in the fourth but allowed 21 for the Coyotes 65-40 win.

Weese led with 14 total points for the Bulldogs along with Cepeda with 10—a career high in a varsity game. Ashton Schiltz, Jaime Infante, and Jovanny Infante each contributed 4 while Roberto Loya and Colby Lathrop had 2 apiece. “We are improving,” said Cepeda. “We are moving the ball with more control but still need to box out better on defense.”

The Bulldogs final game of the tournament was against the Western Plains/Healy Bobcats on Friday, February 7. The Bulldogs hit the court missing six players due to illness and/or injury so had to make some adjustments on the floor. They played a close first quarter with the Bobcats holding the lead 10-9 at the buzzer. Continuing to work hard, the Dogs added 7 in the second but the Cats pulled ahead 21-16.

The Bulldogs, who have consistently struggled in the third played their best quarter of the game as senior Jaime Infante opened the quarter with a couple of quick baskets. The Bobcats answered and extended their lead 35-26 going into the fourth. Ashton Schiltz hit a couple to start the fourth and Roberto Loya hit a three but the Dogs could not get any more to fall as the Bobcats won the game 48-33.

Harley Weese finished the game with 8, Fabian Cepeda 6, Roberto Loya 5, Ashton Schiltz 5, Jaime Infante 4, Kole Butts 3, and Colby Lathrop 2. "We are starting to play more as a team," said Jaime Infante. "With so many players out for the tournament, more people are stepping up on offense."

"We have had to play more disciplined with so many players out sick," added Harley Weese. "We cannot afford to get into foul trouble. The younger players are stepping up and our turnovers are improving." The Bulldogs return to regular season action on Tuesday, February 11, when they travel to Hill City and return home to host Cheylin on February 14.