

## Lady Bulldogs Win Regional Championship

By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Lady Bulldogs fought hard to win the Regional Volleyball Championship held in Rexford on October 22. With wins over Decatur County and Rawlins County, the girls advance to the Sub-State tournament in Ransom on October 26 for a chance at the state tournament.

The Bulldogs entered the tournament with a 28-6 record giving them a first round bye. The Decatur County Red Devils defeated Cheylin to advance to the semi-final game against Golden Plains. The Red Devils were still warmed up from their first game and pulled ahead of the Bulldogs early in set 1. With a series of kills from senior Zoey Hillis, the Bulldogs tied the game up at 14. The Red Devils responded to regain the lead. The 'Dogs pulled ahead 17-16 and held on for the 25-22 win.

In set 2, the Lady Bulldogs took the early lead but the Red Devils fought hard to tie it up. With some powerful front row hits from sophomore Kassie Miller and a strong serve series from junior Ashley Stoll and sophomore Rayna Taylor, the Bulldogs held a slight lead 18-16. Miller served up three more before freshman Breanna Rath finished the game with a 25-20 Bulldog win.

Rawlins County-Atwood also received a bye in the first round and had to work hard to knock off St. Francis in three close sets to advance to the championship game against the Lady Bulldogs. The Buffaloes took an early lead pulling ahead of the Bulldogs 9-2. The Dogs just couldn't get in sync and worked hard to score but fell to the Buffaloes 13-25 in set 1.

"Our hits were strong and we hustled after the ball," said sophomore Carli Nieman. "They had good servers and our communication wasn't what it needed to be. We corrected that for the second set."

The Bulldogs switched sides and responded to the support from their crowd as they kept set 2 tied throughout the early part of the game. The Dogs finally pulled ahead 16-15 but the Lady Buffaloes fought hard. The Bulldogs kept their motivation high as they defeated Rawlins County 25-23 and prepared for a third set.

Both sides of the gym were quite vocal in their support of the girls on the floor as they battled it out for the championship in set 3. Golden Plains took control early on and won the set, the match, and the championship 25-11.

"It was very exciting to defeat Atwood," added Nieman. "We had played them earlier in the season at the Ringneck Classic and had lost. We really wanted to be the Regional Champions and motivated each other prior to the game." "It was exciting that we didn't give up after the first set and fought back for the win," said junior libero Brooke Stoll. "I had faith in our team." "We were missing senior starter Mabel Lugo due to a knee injury," added junior Ashley Stoll. "We couldn't get anything going for a while. We all had to step up and contribute under the modified rotation." "Everyone did a nice job stepping up into their roles," continued

Brooke Stoll. “It was very exciting winning with the support of our fans, families, and classmates,” concluded Ashley.

The Lady Bulldogs will play the Victoria Lady Knights in the Sub-State tournament in Ransom on October 26. Golden Plains had defeated Victoria in a three-set win in mid-September and know they will have to play hard to get to the championship game. “Our ultimate goal is to qualify for state,” added Brooke.