

Lady 'Dogs Win Sagebrush
By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Lady Bulldogs won three in a row at the Sagebrush Shootout in Brewster to claim the tournament championship. The girls won games over Heartland Christian, St. Francis, and Triplains/Brewster throughout the week of basketball. "We played well together and played hard," said Kaylie Schaben. "We took the tournament one game at a time. It was fun to win."

The first game was held on Monday against Heartland. The Bulldogs jumped to an early 20-5 lead over the Crusaders. The Bulldogs continued to outscore the Crusaders for the 62-20 win. All the girls contributed to the win with points from Gabrielle Schiltz 13, KayCee Miller 11, Mabel Lugo 11, Maggie Nieman 8, Kaylie Schaben 7, Carmen Sepulveda 6, Emily Stoltz 2, Amanda Cheney 2, and Morgan Ritter 2.

On Friday, the girls played St. Francis. This was a well-played game by both teams. The Bulldogs took an early 4-0 lead before the Indians answered. Following a 6-6 tie, the Indians pulled ahead 14-10 by the end of the first. Undaunted, the Bulldogs stuck to their game plan and tied it back up at 14. The Indians hit a three, but the Bulldogs were unstoppable as they worked together and pulled ahead 29-18. A buzzer shot by the Indians sent them to the half time trailing 29-20.

The Bulldogs again worked together in the second half to ease their way to a 45-34 lead in the third. The Indians outscored the Bulldogs in the fourth 10-9 but the Bulldogs held on for a 53-44 victory and advanced to the championship game.

KayCee Miller, who had multiple steals converted to layups against the Indians, led the offense with 21 points. Additional scores were made by Schiltz 12, Lugo 8, Schaben 6, Ritter 4, and Nieman 2.

The championship game was held on Saturday against the Triplains/Brewster Titans. The Bulldogs jumped out to a 16-0 lead before the Titans scored with two minutes remaining in the first. The Bulldogs, who didn't miss a free throw the entire first quarter, stayed focused on the job at hand to lead 23-4 going into the second.

Coach Parker Christensen encouraged the girls to "push" the ball and to "keep the ball moving" in the second as the game progressed with determination from both teams. With each team putting in 12 points, the Bulldogs maintained a 35-16 lead at the half.

Neither team let up the pressure as the Titans nudged the 'Dogs 9-8 in the third. The Titans put up a fight to the end, but the Bulldogs held on for the championship win 59-35. Miller again led the Bulldogs with 30 points. Schiltz added 13, Schaben 6, Lugo 5, Nieman 2, Sepulveda 2, and Cheney 1. Miller also had 7 rebounds, 3 assists, and 8 steals. Additional stats include Schiltz 1 reb, 2 asst, 2 st; Schaben 6 reb, 2 ast, 2 stl; Candace Taylor 2 reb, 1 ast; Nieman 1 reb, 5 ast, 2 stl; Lugo 4 reb, 2 stl; Ritter 7 reb; Jennifer Esparza-Luna 1 reb; and Sepulveda 1 reb, 1 stl.

"We played aggressively throughout the tournament," said Morgan Ritter. "We held our ground for the win. It's a good way to start the season." The Bulldogs are now 3-1 as they host Northern Valley on December 16 for their first home game.