

Bulldogs Play Final Game

By Sidney Taylor

The Golden Plains High School Football team finished their 2022 season with a 14-62 loss against Ashland in the sectional round of the KSHSAA Six-Man Playoffs. The Bulldogs worked hard, but ended the game at half-time.

The Bulldogs struggled to stop the Bluejays at the beginning of the game, allowing them 36 in the first quarter. The Bulldogs came out strong with a touchdown from Mason Green, senior to start the second. Iu Ribera, junior, added two, putting 8 on the board for the Bulldogs. Dylan Wark, freshman, added 6 with a late game touchdown. The Bulldogs held the Bluejays to 26 points in the second quarter, but couldn't stop them from taking the win. "It was a tough way to end the season," said Coach Travis Smith, "but I am very proud of the improvement this team showed this year. We are definitely going to miss our lone senior Mason Green, but we are lucky to return the entire rest of our team. Getting a playoff win last week was great for these guys. As a team we just need to take the next step. We strive to be as tough as the Ashland team we played tonight"

This year, six man football was sanctioned by KSHSAA for the first time. The Bulldogs won their cross bracket game allowing them a spot in the KSHSAA playoff game. Their season ended with a 3-7 record, with many hard fought games. Starting the season off, the Bulldogs lost four games, but this didn't put them down. The Bulldogs took two back-to-back wins, giving them the energy they needed. The Bulldogs hit a rough patch losing two tough ones, but they came back and won when it was most important. To make it into the playoffs, the Dogs beat Rolla. This win gave Coach Travis Smith his 100th career win.

This season, many underclassmen were able to show off their abilities. With only one senior and four juniors, all the sophomores and freshmen were asked to step up. The Golden Plains Football team consisted of one senior, Mason Green, who has been a contributing member of the GPHS Football team all four years of high school. Green carried the team with 11 touchdowns, and finished the 2022 season with 521 yards--449-rushing 72 receiving, 89 tackles, and 1 fumble recovery. "I think we showed great improvement throughout the season," said Green. "I am proud of myself for leading the team in points, but I wouldn't have been able to without my teammates being able to move the ball well. I have enjoyed my four years on the team and wish them good luck for next season."

Green was joined by four junior leaders, Will Bruggeman, Landon Meier, Iu Ribera, and Abraão Carneiro. Bruggeman and Meier have been a part of the team for three years, and will continue playing their senior year. "We were a young team with little experience," Will Bruggemann said. "Maturing will take us a long way, which is what will help us next season.

Meier was a team standout. He led the team with 94 tackles, 47 of those being solo tackles. Meier was a big contributor offensively and defensively. "I am proud of how our team improved throughout the year and think we will continue to see these improvements in the next season," said Meier. Meier was named to the Sports in Kansas Stat Leader list for his tackles.

The team welcomed two foreign exchange students, Iu Ribera and Abraão Carneiro. Iu Ribera quickly took the title as the team's kicker. Ribera finished the season with 17 kicking points, and 24 kick-off touchbacks. "We worked hard this season and made big improvements throughout," said Ribera. "I enjoyed being on the team and made lots of friends. Good luck to next year's team." Abraão Carneiro was also welcomed to the team. "I was happy to be part of the team and enjoyed my experience. I think the team did a very good job," said Carneiro. Diego Perez, freshman, led the team with 824 yards: 744 rushing, 61 receiving, and 61 passing. He was also named to the Sports in Kansas Stat leader list for tackles with 81 and was on the list during the season for his rushing yards.

The Bulldogs worked hard this year, and will continue to improve for the upcoming season. “The talent is there, we just need to figure it out and I’ve got to do a better job at that,” said Coach Travis Smith. “I’m so proud to be a Bulldog!”