

## MS Girls Claim Fourth Undefeated League Title

By Judy Rogers

The Golden Plains Middle School A-Team claimed their fourth consecutive undefeated season and Western Kansas Liberty League Championship on February 9 in Brewster. "This is so awesome!" exclaimed Sidney Taylor, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the leading scorer for the tournament. "It was such a fun season. We have learned so much from our coaches."

The girls were the #1 seed in the tournament as the only undefeated team in the league. They played Weskan for the first game on Thursday, February 7. They had no trouble and easily won the game 53-3 with Weskan only making a single basket in the second quarter. Sidney Taylor put in 18 for the Bulldogs along with Jordyn Fleckenstein 13, Breanna Rath 10, Jazline Manriquez 8, Mia Rogers 2, and McHaley Carter 2.

Their semi-final game on Saturday was against the Northern Valley Lady Huskies. The Lady Bulldogs took the lead 6-4 in the first but the Huskies outscored the Bulldogs 6-2 in the second to lead 10-8 at the half. Defense was key in the third as the Huskies added 3 and the Bulldogs 2. The Huskies maintained the lead in the fourth until a last second shot from Jordyn Fleckenstein sent the game into overtime tied at 20.

The Bulldogs took care of the game in overtime with four points from Sidney Taylor and a free throw from Breanna Rath as the defense held the Huskies to 2 giving the Dogs the win 25-22 and a spot in the championship game. Taylor put up 11 for Golden Plains along with 8 from Jordyn Fleckenstein and 6 from Breanna Rath.

The championship game was played later on Saturday afternoon against the Grinnell/Wheatland Thunderhawks. The Bulldogs pulled ahead 7-3 in the first. The 'Hawks matched the Dogs 7-7 in the second to trail 10-14 at half time. The Bulldogs added another 7 in the third while the Hawks were unable to score. The Dogs finished the game with another 6 in the final quarter to win the game and the championship 27-13.

Sidney Taylor once again led the Bulldogs in scoring with 13. Fleckenstein added 11, McHaley Carter 2, and Rath 1. This is the fourth year the GPMS A-team girls have won the WKLL Championship. They defeated Grinnell/Wheatland all four years for the title and now hold a 51-0 winning streak for the past four seasons.

"It was an exciting tournament," said Breanna Rath, 8<sup>th</sup> grade who has never lost a game in middle school. "It was pretty awesome to go undefeated for the fourth year." "The most exciting thing was tying the semi-final game to go into overtime and win," added McHaley Carter, 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

"I enjoyed being able to play as a team with all the girls," continued Jazline Manriquez, 8<sup>th</sup> grade. "We were able to improve as a whole team throughout the season."

The girls look forward to playing together again in high school next year. "It has been a lot of fun playing basketball in middle school," added Manriquez. "We hope to continue the winning streak in high school," continued Rath. "We wish next year's middle school team good luck."