

By Pastor Vince Carrig

Sports Writer

Tanya Metcalf took control of the third quarter and steered her Lady Plainsmen to a 56-46 win over North Platte St. Pat's Tuesday evening in Grant.

The sophomore center Metcalf's heroics included stealing a ball at mid-court to guide it to the hole, and swishing an offensive rebound after ripping it free to give Perkins County a 42-33 lead at the beginning of the fourth quarter.

Metcalf scored 10 points in the third quarter alone, and added seven more the rest of the game. Her slipping into an open space for an easy basket put Perkins County ahead for good at 33-31.

The Lady Plainsmen exploded for 23 third quarter points after trailing at halftime 21-17. They fixed the shortfall right away after Brooke Poppe (nine points) hit an open jump shot from the right wing and Mackenzie Hite stuck in a three pointer.

A 13-4 run, to which junior Jessi Day contributed a three-point play, a breakaway outlet pass, and a steal taken to the hole decided the game in the home team's favor.

As it had for much of the game, the two teams took and gave up the lead. Lady Irish forward Brianna Wieseler stuffed an inbound pass through and the free throw to match in the third quarter. But Perkins County's Jessi Day (seven points) matched her effort right away by depositing a pass Hite lasered to her and canning the bonus free throw to knot the score again at 29-29.

With Metcalf handling the inside of the offensive zone, senior point guard Mackenzie Hite

struck from the outside. Hite (12 points) succeeded twice from the outside in the second half, with one shot counting for three points and another for two. Her two free throws with 1:02 left assured her Lady Plainsmen of their second win of the season. St. Pat's guard Shelby Pieper plunged Perkins County into an early 12-5 hole after her teammates broke a pressing defense and handed her a hoop and her first of two three pointers.

But Poppe, Metcalf, and Jenni Sis stayed active and eventually pulled their team even. Poppe landed backdoor and breakaway layups, Metcalf rolled and glanced a shot off glass, and Sis (11 points) arched back and shot straight up for two the tough way.

Each team raided the other's defensive glass to pull down rebounds and gain second-shot and third-shot opportunities. St. Pat's center Megan Mayfield scored nine points, mostly on left-handed put-backs of missed shots.

Guard Mandy O'Malley tallied 13 for the Lady Irish, working open for at least a field goal, three pointer or free throw in every quarter.

Sis put back a shot, pumped in three free throws, and hustled to keep a critical possession alive in cracking double-digits with 11 points.