

By Pastor Vince Carrig

Sports Writer

Jessi Day took over to account for six quick third quarter points and thrust Lady Plainsmen to a 39-26 win over Chase County Thursday night in Grant.

Day (eight points) fell away to avoid a defender draped all over her and score, then intercepted a pass in the front court and knocked it off the top of the backboard square. She slid a second interception to Jenni Sis to grow a 19-14 Perkins County lead into a comfortable 25-17, third quarter cushion.

The Lady Plainsmen cinched the win with William Tell-like accuracy, burying eight free throws in nine tries. Sis, Mackenzie Hite, Brooke Poppe and Matisyn Humphrey hit every fourth quarter free throw they attempted.

"I was pleased how we handled ourselves in the fourth quarter of the game. We are starting to become a better fourth quarter team, which is great," Lady Plainsmen Head Coach Chris Mestl said.

Lady Longhorns forward Karlee Palmer only liked three pointers, hitting a trio of them for nine points. These irritated the Lady Plainsmen, as Palmer tied the score at 14-14 and pulled Chase County to within six of the lead at 29-24 when she did the job from the left corner.

Perkins County relaxed toward the end of the game, but started it in a 5-0 hole. Palmer's first "three" had a hand in that, along with one of swing forward Lexee Reichert's two put-backs.

Mackenzie Hite replied with two three-pointers for the Lady Plainsmen, with one wide-open

shot coming from a give-and-go with Day after an inbound pass.

Hite (nine points) grabbed consecutive interceptions after Perkins County came out pressing the Lady Longhorns to begin the second half.

Starting center Shania Metcalf provided the Lady Plainsmen tough defense in the post, rebounding, blocking shots, and even breaking up a two-on-one by intercepting a pass.

Freshman Matisyn Humphrey claimed the night's most difficult shot, arching her back from underneath the net to fight traffic and score. Humphrey supplied Perkins County with a put-back and a free-throw as well.

Perkins County doubled the Lady Longhorns' scorers, 8-4. Palmer scored nine, Reichert eight, forward Alexis Tropf seven, and Shannon Liewer a pair for the visitors. The Lady Plainsmen got three consecutive points and five overall from Leslie Burge, and a turnaround shot from Debbie Dahlkoetter to go along with points from the five starters and Humphrey.

Next action

The Lady Plainsmen opened the SPVA tournament with a 49-32 win over Chase County on Monday night; see the next edition for coverage.

They put their four-game winning streak on the line against top-ranked Hershey (7-3) tonight (Thursday) at Mid Plains Community College in North Platte, with hopes of facing the Maxwell-North Platte St. Pat's winner for a shot at their fifth-consecutive SPVA championship.