By Pastor Vince Carrig
Sports Writer

Quarterback Elliot Carlson ran for 187 yards and two touchdowns and threw for another to propel the Plainsmen to a 39-6 rout over the Bayard Tigers Friday night in Grant.

Though Carlson's scoring runs both measured just five yards, the quarterback who has rushed for 1133 yards this year gained ground in chunks by breaking Tigers tackling attempts.

Carlson's 31-yard excursion set up running back Alex Johnston's five-yard touchdown on Perkins County's first drive. The 6-1 Plainsmen scored on their first three drives for a 20-0 lead.

Austin Thelander's second amazing touchdown catch in as many weeks gave the Plainsmen a 13-0 lead with just 7:57 elapsed. Facing away from Carlson, the senior receiver Thelander spun and caught the ball with one hand at the same time; he gained some speed and broke linebacker Tristan Hunter's tackle at the 10-yard line for a 23-yard pass play.

"The whole play overall was just executed perfectly—the [offensive] line had it blocked, and Elliot again put [the pass] where only I was able to get it," Thelander said after the game.

The Plainsmen's "Bruise Brothers," defensive lineman Vinny Ross and linebacker Alex Malmkar, stopped Bayard and set Perkins County up with good field position for their second score when Ross sacked Tigers quarterback Zac Rice hard and Malmkar recovered the fumble Rice left on the ground. Ross, Malmkar and lineman Blake Poppe's sacks made the night long for the junior quarterback.

Poppe's sack motivated a Bayard punt, which the Plainsmen turned into their third touchdown

drive. Carlson capped it by exploiting a huge hole beside the right tackle and made the score 20-0 as the second quarter began.

"[We wanted to] disguise the coverages at the snap, use good secondary footwork, and bring enough pressure [on the quarterback] to throw their timing off," Plainsmen Head Coach Chip Kay said of the team's plan to combat Bayard's pass-heavy attack.

Bayard made the chilled crowd think a little when Rice bombed a 26-yard touchdown pass to receiver Braydon Parriott at the end zone's right sideline with 5:32 left in the first half. Plainsmen Ross blasted through the Tigers line and resoundingly blocked Chris Wurm's extra point kick afterward.

Plainsmen running back Tim Johnson put victory all but out-of-reach for Bayard, however, digging the Plainsmen out from their own nine-yard line. The junior Johnson swept left with a handoff and escaped 91 yards untouched for a 26-6 Perkins County halftime lead. Cornerback David Schuler came the closest to tackling Johnson, but didn't approach him until Johnson had crossed the Bayard 30-yard line.

Freshman quarterback Christian White gunned his first career touchdown pass with 5:22 left. Christian White rolled left but then dodged defensive end Austin Willey's pressure by turning right and rifling a pass to Matt Sestak in a populated end zone.

"Matt did a great job getting open; he had reached the end of his route and he adjusted to stay open—he did a great job," White said.

Carlson called his own number four times in a 48-yard drive which he finished up by raising his arm to fake a pass and keeping the ball for the final five yards.

Parriott piled up 148 receiving yards on just six catches. He tried to run away for a second touchdown, but Plainsmen defensive back Sestak overtook him from behind and made Parriott settle for a 60-yard catch and run.

The 3-4 Tigers bent the Plainsmen defense with 60 yards on that one play early in the second quarter, but Perkins County did not break. With Bayard in the "red zone," linebacker Malmkar backpedaled into coverage, saw Rice ready to throw, leaped and one-handed an interception to keep Bayard off the board.

"That's [Sestak and Malmkar's plays] just great football. Matt's effort and tackle are an expectation on our team —we believe that by making that stop we will keep them out of the end zone or create a turnover. That is exactly what happened. You don't win games with yards, only points! Matt's play was a great show of effort," Coach Kay said.

Next Action

A win at Bridgeport on Friday would give the Plainsmen their third-consecutive district championship and make them 11-0 in district play over that same time period.

Bridgeport sports a 1-6 record with their only win coming over hapless Dundy County-Stratton in the season's first week. While the Bulldogs have remained somewhat-competitive with opponents common to them and the Plainsmen, a strong North Platte St. Pat's squad dismantled them 44-0 early in the year.

P.C. 39, Bayard 6

	1	2	3	4	
Bayard	0	6	0	0	—6
Perkins Co.	13	13	7	6	—39

Rushing leaders—Perkins County: Carlson 18-187 (31) 2TD; Johnson 6-108 (91T) TD; Vak 10-47 (20); Johnston 4-20 (9); Bayard: Rice 16-55 (20); Hunter 11-30 (10).

Passing leaders—Perkins County: Carlson 5-7-89-1; White 1-1-12-1; Bayard: Rice

15-23-180-1-2.

Receiving leaders—Perkins County: Thelander 3-42 (23T) TD; Miyamoto 1-27; Johnson 1-20; Sestak 1-12 TD; Bayard: Parriott 6-148 (60) TD; Schuller, D. 2-10 (7); Schuller, P. 2-10 (6).

Tackling leaders—Perkins County: Ross 8 (4); Malmkar 6.5 (2); Sestak 5 (5); Johnston 4.5 (2); Thelander 3 (3); Whalen 3 (1).