By Pastor Vince Carrig
Sports Writer

Tigers forward Tyler Freeland hunted up a steal and 6-foot-5 center Joe Rettele put back Freeland's missed free throw so Dundy County-Stratton slinked out of Grant with a 48-45 win over the Plainsmen Saturday night.

The Plainsmen had the lead and breathing room after Colton White got possession and bounce-passed to Tim Johnson, who laid the ball off the backboard for a 45-42 lead with 1:06 to play.

A horrifying sequence of events left Perkins County without a win: freshman forward Trey Haislip banked home a wide open offensive rebound on the 5-2 Tigers next possession. Then, Freeland nabbed a steal and drew a foul.

Freeland tied the game with his first free throw, but his missed second free throw bounded high enough that only Rettele could reach it. Reach it Rettele did, glancing it off of the right side of the glass and down to give Dundy County-Stratton a 47-45 lead.

Rettele finished as he started–scoring points–knocking down a free throw and forcing Perkins County to need three points in 6.8 seconds just to tie the game. The Tigers defense allowed no clear view of the basket during the last ticks and sank Perkins County's record to 1-6.

Dundy County-Stratton held the lead for over three quarters of the game, pumping it as high as seven points with forward Dylan Petersen's free throw at 5:41 of the third quarter.

But the Plainsmen stalked the Tigers from behind, taking their first lead (36-35) with six minutes left when guard Quinton Hite dribbled coast-to-coast and crammed a layup in a small window between defenders.

Each team took possession of the lead twice from that point, and one team tied the other twice as well.

Rettele fittingly scored the Tigers final three points, as he led all players by scoring 23 total. He scored like a house on fire burns in the first half, imposing his will through pivots and putbacks close to the basket for eight points in both the first and second quarters.

Alex Johnston led the Plainsmen attack with 17 points, relentlessly surging toward the basket for shots and foul calls. The senior power forward gave Perkins County a late 42-41 lead with a shot high and wide off of the backboard. He took advantage of five of six free throws allotted him.

Finding themselves down quickly at 9-2, the Plainsmen gained some equilibrium and entered the second quarter trailing 15-11 thanks to White's breakaway layup and Poppe cramming a shot down from the low post.

As the Plainsmen continued to make up ground in the second quarter, Rettele got a favorable bounce at the halftime buzzer. His shot from the right corner went off the front rim and launched straight up in the air. The ball skinned the backboard and fell through the net for a 28-22 Tigers advantage.

The freshman Haislip also stole a pass in the fourth quarter and used a hesitation move at the basket to give Dundy County-Stratton a 39-37 lead. His offensive rebound and putback helped him to lead all Tigers not named "Rettele" with seven points.

Next Action

The Plainsmen play just one game this week, with Ogallala making the 20-mile drive to Grant. The 1-4 Indians scratched out a win over Sutherland, but have lost all four games by double digits and allowed Minden to hang 80 points on them.

PC 45, DCS 48

DCS	15	13	7	13–48
Perkins Co.	11	11	10	13–45

Scoring leaders–Perkins County: Johnston 6FG 5/6FT–17; Hite 5–10; Poppe 1 4/7–6; Johnson 2 1/2–5; Dundy County-Stratton: Rettele 10 3/6–23; Haislip 3 1/2–7; Stute 2 (1[x3])–7.