By Pastor Vince Carrig
Sports Writer

GRANT—Four Trojans backs scored out of the wishbone offense and Cambridge defenders kept plays in front of them to defeat the Plainsmen 34-8 in the second round of the NSAA's C2 playoffs in Grant on Thursday night.

The Trojans' touchdown runs increased in yardage as the game wore on and their offensive line wore on Perkins County's defense.

Quarterback Hayden Ekberg started Cambridge's scoring by finding a seam along the right hashes and breaking an arm tackle for a 10-yard touchdown run on the Trojans' first drive.

The Plainsmen drove far down the field toward tying the first quarter's score, but Gus Petersen sniffed out an interception and shifted into overdrive along the right sideline with a 77-yard return to give the visitors a 14-0 lead.

The Plainsmen broke the stale donut on the scoreboard on a drive set up by Brody Prante's fumble recovery on a punt to midfield. Nick Turner sped into 14 yards of running room to set up Michael York's back-to-the-defense quarterback sneak and pull Perkins County to within eight at 14-6.

But Cambridge's offensive line opened up holes for their wishbone runners, and the Trojans scored three drives without completing so much as a pass.

"The game came down to some missed opportunities in the first half; if we convert those and don't turn the ball over we go in at halftime in a much better situation. In the second half we paid the price on the outside for committing to stop the inside run," Plainsmen Head Coach Chip Kay said after the game.

Delvin Jackson took advantage of some misdirection; as the third rusher heading toward the line, Jackson hit a large hole and picked up the four yards necessary for Cambridge's third touchdown.

Ekberg then made two option pitches count for points, one off of a scramble to Seth Trosper from 21 yards away, and an absolute last-second flick to Carson Farr for a 35-yard jaunt to pay dirt.

Along with his interception, Petersen picked up 100 yards on the ground for a Cambridge team that averaged a shocking 7.4 yards per carry.

The Trojans gained 325 yards on the ground Thursday night.

Riley Kosmicki planted backup quarterback Rayce Dauwen in the end zone late in the game to round out the scoring and end the Plainsmen's season with a 34-8 loss.

The Trojans mostly kept Plainsmen rushers Nick Turner and Alex Johnston in sight, with neither advancing more than 15 yards in one play.

Jeremy Hagan caught a nice lob pass from York along the right sideline, but got tackled from behind after a 39-yard Plainsmen gain.

The Plainsmen finished the season 6-4.

Coach Kay summarized Perkins County's season by saying, "We are at a great point for a football program right now. Certainly our
seniors deserve a lot of credit for their leadership over the last year.
This program made the quarterfinals in 2006, and we are working to make that the standard. It is important that we bring back the mentality that we own the playoffs. It's time to raise the bar—with that comes a lot of hard work—but I think our young men are ready for it."

The 7-3 Trojans advanced to host the 8-2 Sutherland Sailors in Cambridge on Tuesday night (results not available at press time). Sutherland sneaked by previously-undefeated Blue Hill 14-12 last Wednesday, November 4.

Score by Quarter

Cambridge	14	7	7	6	—34
Perkins Co.	0	6	0	2	—8

Scoring Summary

Qtr, Time, Scoring play:

Cambridge 1 2:46 Ekberg 10 run (Rodriguez kick). Cambridge 1 1:35 Petersen 77 INT return (Rodriguez kick).

Perkins Co. 2 7:33 York 1 run (kick failed)

Cambridge 2 3:28 Jackson 4 run (Rodriguez kick).

Cambridge 3 5:18 Trosper 21 run (Rodriguez kick).

Cambridge 4 11:50 Farr 35 run (conversion failed).

Perkins Co. 4 4:15 Kosmicki safety.

Statistical leaders: rushing: Cambridge--Petersen 14-100 (19) 0; Jackson 6-57 (23) 1; Long 6-52 (10) 0; Ekberg 6-50 (15) 1; Farr 6-46 (35) 1; Perkins County Johnston 15-95 (13) 0; Turner 16-59 (14); Prante, Brody 4-29 (9) 0; York 14-28 (7) 1. Passing: Cambridge-- Ekberg 1-2-8-0-0; Perkins County—York 4-8-88-0-1. Tackles: Perkins County—Kosmicki 6.5 (7); Ross and Fosbinder 4.5 (5) each.