By Pastor Vince Carrig
Sports Writer

The Red Raiders' deadly outside shooting, driving layups and offensive rebounding combined to plunder the Plainsmen 62-44 Friday night at Cabela's Athletic Facility in Sidney.

Senior Sidney guard Casey Mabey scored the first four points of the game by putting rebounds away, then spun a three-point shot from over his head in a 26-9 Red Raiders first quarter that cemented the outcome.

"We did play well after the first quarter," Plainsmen Head Coach Shawn Cole said after the game. "If you look at most of our games, we have had slow starts and have [had] to climb our way back into them. This is taking a toll on our team. We are having to play so hard to get back in the games that we have little left at the end of games. I feel this is affecting our thinking at the end to have the right kind of success to win the close games."

Plainsmen forward Alex Johnston hit free throws and guard Tim Johnson escaped for a breakaway layup to pull Perkins County close at 6-4 early in the game, but the 4-2 Red Raiders galloped away with a 20-3 run immediately afterward.

Reserve guards Hunter Vowers and Paxton Ehler both connected from beyond the arc in that first quarter, with Ehler using a double-crossover dribble to get loose before launching his shot.

Perkins County center Blake Poppe (15 points) helped the Plainsmen to give Sidney something to think about with a couple of spin moves from the blocks that helped a 17-9 Plainsmen run and cut the Red Raiders' lead to nine points (35-26) just after halftime.

The Plainsmen actually kept pace with Sidney over the last three quarters, losing by the smallest margin–36-35.

Sidney, however, posted a 7-0 spurt of their own after Perkins County's best run. Mabey (17 points) crashed into Poppe's defensive wall and hit both the shot and the bonus free throw with 6:05 left in the third quarter.

Sophomore guard Lane Harvey proved too much for Perkins County's defense to handle in the first quarter, driving the lane, creating an "and-one" and pulling up in the wheel for seven points.

Mabey added his second three pointer and Harvey (13 points) hit two after the first quarter to keep Sidney comfortably ahead.

Tim Johnson released for two breakaway layups and towered over a defender's hand for points to score 10 points in the game.

Poppe hammered down eight points in the third quarter alone, and Plainsmen teammate Jake Sexson both served Poppe a perfect behind-the-back pass and scored eight points of his own.

Sidney hit 8-of-9 of its free throws.

P.C. 44, Sidney 62

Perkins Co.	9	14	12	9–44
Sidney	26	9	18	9–62

Scoring leaders–Perkins County: Poppe 7FG 1/2FT–15; Johnson 5–10; Sexson 3 2/4–8 Johnston 1 3/5–5; Sidney: Mabey 5 (2[x3]) 1/2–17; Harvey 3 (2) 1/1–13; Ehler 2 (1) 2/2–9; Rosenbaum 3 3/4–9; Vowers 1 (1) 1/1–6; Lewis 3–6.