By Pastor Vince Carrig
Sports Writer

Guard Quinton Hite branded the Longhorns for a three- pointer and two free throws in the last minute of play to cap a 17-point rally and squeeze his Plainsmen past Chase County, 54-53, last Thursday night (Jan. 10) in Imperial.

Perkins County trailed 38-22 in the first two minutes of the third quarter and completed their recovery when Hite swished two charity tosses with 7.7 seconds left in the game.

The Longhorns decided to risk fouling Hite instead of allowing the Plainsmen to attempt the game's last shot.

Chase County's response to Hite's scores fell on deaf ears as Longhorns guard Jeffrey Dickey threw a pass to the foul line—right to Plainsmen guard Tim Johnson!

Perkins County fouled point guard Kale Gockley in an attempt to regain possession in the last minute. The senior guard Gockley had hit four free throws in a row earlier in the quarter. With 14 seconds left, the point guard missed both free throws and left the Longhorns ahead by only one point, 53-52.

Plainsmen point guard Hite (13 points) had rotated left-to-right around the arc and banged down a three pointer to pull the Plainsmen to within one point of the lead at 53-52 lead in the game's last 30 seconds.

Gockley's four free throws in consecutive trips down the floor gave the Longhorns a 53-49 lead with 38.6 seconds left.

Hite's trey followed a heroic steal at the wheel, drive and unbelievable underhanded scoop layup at the left side of the basket with his right hand to give his Plainsmen their first tie (49-49) since 2-2 just 28 seconds into the game.

He led Perkins County with seven points in the fourth quarter and 13 for the game.

Fellow Plainsmen Alex Johnston converted an inbound pass into points, using the window to finally pull Perkins County to within one score 29 minutes into the game. Johnston's

underhanded flip earlier in the quarter helped Perkins County score an impressive 21 points in the final frame.

Scoring machine forward Kelton Fisher released for a breakaway basket and foul shot, seemingly giving Chase County enough of a lead at 47-43 with 3:41 left.

Alex Johnston (10 points) absorbed contact and scored anyway, making the bonus free throw to vaporize the Longhorns' lead to just 45-43 with 3:59 left.

Blake Poppe's power at the basket put away a Tim Johnson baseline pass and forced in another back-to-basket shot to jumpstart Perkins County's fourth quarter rally. Poppe (11 points) also intercepted a pass and sprung Elliot Carlson for a layup as the Plainsmen instantly hacked Chase County's 10-point lead in half.

Fisher kept the Plainsmen at a distance (42-31), however by knocking down a jumper in the paint with a defender in his face in the third quarter.

Fisher led all scorers with 18 points.

The Longhorns outscored visiting Perkins County in all of the first three quarters. Four Plainsmen scored as many or more points in the fourth quarter as they had in the first three eight-minute periods. Four Plainsmen made every free throw they took.

Chase County emerged from halftime and shot three pointers without conscience; sophomore guard Jeffrey Dickey nailed two, Kale Gockley hit, and Dickey's shot with a foot on the arc gave him only two points from downtown. The 11-point spree set the Longhorns up with a 38-22 lead just over two minutes into the third quarter.

A pure shooter, the Longhorns Fisher troubled the Plainsmen with consistent accuracy, succeeding from just inside the arc and on two free throws in the second quarter to boost Chase County's lead to 27-20 at halftime.

Colton White glanced one off the glass and knocked down a free throw to draw Perkins County within three points of the lead at 20-17 in the second quarter. Hite warmed up in the second quarter, downing two shots in the wheel.

Blake Poppe's putback of his own shot and two free throws along with Tim Johnson's one-on-one, back-to-basket spin move cut Chase County's huge lead to just 13-10 near the end of the first quarter.

Kelton Fisher spotted up in the wheel three consecutive times and made all three count to bury Perkins County under a 13-4 Longhorns lead. The Plainsmen missed six shots and four free throws to aid the home team.

Fisher erupted for eight points in the first quarter.

PC 54, CC 53

Perkins Co.	10	10	13	21—54
Chase Co.	16	11	16	10—53

Scoring—Perkins County: Hite 4FG (1[x3]) 2/2FT—13; Poppe 4 3/3—11; Johnston 4 2/5—10; Carlson 2 (1) 0/2—7; Johnson 12/2—4; Sexson 1 2/2—4; White 1 1/2—3; Breazeale 1—2; Chase County: Fisher 7 4/7—18; Dickey 3 (3)—15; Gockley 1 (1) 5/8—10; Luhrs (1)—3; Wallin 1 1/2—3; Sorenson 2/2—2; Bell 2/2—2.