

By Pastor Vince Carrig

Sports Writer

Quinton Hite's steal of Hershey guard Josh Connell's dribble and long outlet to Elliot Carlson sealed a 44-38 win in which Hite starred as his Perkins County team laid claim to third place in the South Platte Valley Association tournament Saturday night at North Platte Community College's McDonnell-Belton gymnasium.

The senior point guard Hite led all scorers with 19 points with some coming in spectacular fashion.

Josh Margritz' three pointer with 3:15 left cut the Plainsmen lead to 39-32, sparking hope that the Panthers could erase all of Perkins County's 16-point lead with which the winners entered the fourth quarter.

Hite's steal and pair of free throws in the final minute kept Hershey from cutting the lead to any fewer than four points.

The Panthers got their money's worth in mugging Alex Johnston twice, Caleb Brezeale, Blake Poppe and Elliot Carlson in the third quarter, but the Plainsmen told Hershey to "keep the change" as 6-of-8 from the line gave Perkins County a 39-23 lead.

Dylan Johnson's hanging scoop layup gave Hershey hope at 28-21 2:40 after halftime, but Hite neutralized that by taking guard Colton Marshall's dribble from center court to the rack for a 30-21 Perkins County advantage.

Hite's two launches from behind the yellow (college) three point line swelled the Plainsmen's lead to 24-11.

Hite also scooped in a layup from waist-level after stutter-stepping into the lane and then exploding to the basket. A dial-up from long distance by Carlson and Johnston's power push from the left block left the Plainsmen in good shape at halftime with a 25-13 lead.

The sophomore forward Margritz's two close baskets strung together the shortest of runs for Hershey, paring the Plainsmen's second quarter lead to 21-11.

Hite and Carlson both reached from three-point land, and Hite eluded Panthers to count a left-handed layup after traversing the baseline for a 12-5 Plainsmen lead after one quarter of play.

Both teams probed one another's defenses and missed a gym locker full of shots in a first quarter that the Plainsmen ended on a 10-1 run.

After beating the Plainsmen on Thursday night, North Platte St. Pat's went ahead and won the tournament with a 44-33 victory over Chase County.

Next Action

After traveling to North Platte three times in a week, the 8-8 Plainsmen get to stay home for two games. Sedgwick County plays on Pritchett Court on Thursday, and the 1-13 Maxwell Wildcats head west to Grant on Friday.

Hershey 38, P.C. 44

Hershey 5 8 10 15-38

Perkins Co. 12 13 14 5-44

Scoring leaders-Perkins County: Hite 4FG (3[x2]) 2/5FT-19; Carlson 2 (1) 1/2-8; Johnston 1 5/6-7; Hershey: Margritz 4 (1) 0/1-11; Connell 3 2/3-8; Maassen 3 2/2-8; Johnson, D. 3 2/2-8.

