

Demery scores 25 as Chiefs push past Neville, into quarterfinals

NATCHITOCHEs, La. - Junior JD Demery scored 25 points as the fourth-ranked Natchitoches Central Chiefs surged past the 13th-ranked Neville Tigers, 74-64, Tuesday night in the second round of the Division I non-select boys' basketball playoffs at the 'Teepee' on the campus of NCHS.

The Chiefs (25-5) fell behind early as they trailed 11-7 with 2:45 left in the first quarter. However, the Chiefs' defense went on a patented run to finish the quarter on a 14-2 spurt to lead 21-13.

The Tigers (19-12) trimmed the lead down to seven, 26-19 early in the second quarter. But again, the Chiefs exploded on a 16-2 run pushed the lead to 42-21, the biggest of the night.

However, Neville didn't go away. Early in the third quarter, NCHS senior guard Jaden Braden picked up his third foul forcing him to the bench with the Chiefs leading 42-25. With Braden on the bench, the Tigers stormed back into the game as they trailed 52-45 at the end of the third quarter. While Braden was seated, Demery kept the Chiefs alive as he scored eight points in the third quarter.

When Braden returned to start the fourth quarter, the Chiefs regained control as they quickly surged out to a 64-49 lead with 5:15 to go. But the Tigers simply didn't go away, they fought back to cut the Chiefs' lead to 65-57 with 3:57. But it would be too much of Demery and Khaelyb Creighton who scored 18 points to aid the Chiefs as they pulled away for the win. Braden finished with 11.

The Chiefs shot 60 percent from the field on 29-for-48 shooting and won the rebounding battle 29-26. NCHS forced the Tigers into 21 turnovers while NCHS had 19. The Chiefs scored 50 of their 74 points in the paint.

Next up, the Chiefs will play Friday at home in the quarterfinals against the 12th-ranked Covington Lions (22-10) at time to be announced.