

The fifth-ranked Natchitoches Central Chiefs' basketball team survived a scare from the 28th-ranked Fontainebleau Bulldogs as the Chiefs picked up a 49-47-win Friday night in the first round of the Division I non-select playoffs at home.

NCHS (27-7) led by as many as seven points late in the third quarter, 40-33. But Fontainebleau rallied back to take a one-point lead midway through the fourth quarter, 41-40. The two teams see-sawed for much of the remaining four minutes before Jaden scored on a lay-up with 1:31 left to give NCHS a 48-47 lead. After several wild sequences that led to multiple turnovers for both teams, Braden was fouled and hit one of two free throws to make it 49-47 Chiefs with 18 seconds left.

NCHS appeared to be about to clinch the game, but they were called for a backcourt violation giving the Bulldogs one more possession with 11 seconds left. The Bulldogs got a good look from the nearside wing at a game-winning three-pointer that hit long and off the side of the rim as the clock expired allowing NCHS to advance to the second round.

Braden led the way for NCHS with 17 points while Logan Smith and Ja'Dell Demery had 10 points each for the Chiefs.

Natchitoches Central found a way to win despite shooting 19-for-53 (35 percent) from the field for the game and 2-for-15 from the three-point line.

The Chiefs will face 21st-ranked West Monroe (17-11) Tuesday night in the second round at home at a time to be determined. WMHS beat 12th-ranked Mandeville, 50-40, Friday night in the first round.