

The 10<sup>th</sup>-ranked Natchitoches Central Lady Chiefs dropped a heartbreaker in the second round of the Division IV non-select girls' basketball playoffs Monday night to seventh-ranked Ruston, 50-48, on the road.

The Lady Chiefs (23-11) had a 43-34 lead as the game entered the fourth quarter. However, NCHS didn't score for the first five minutes of the quarter allowing Ruston (25-7) to get back in the game.

With the game tied at 45-45, NCHS's Tootie Gallien drilled a three-pointer to give the Lady Chiefs a 48-45 lead with 1:43 left. However, the Bearkats scored the final five points on a three-pointer and then broke a tie with 12 seconds left on two free throws. The Lady Chiefs had a chance to tie or win with under five seconds left but turned the ball over allowing Ruston to run the clock out as Ruston finished the game on a 16-5 run.

Alyssa Christophe led the Lady Chiefs with 15 points while Akeelah Wade added 12. NCHS was 6-for-19 from the three-point line and 4-for-4 from the free throw line.

Ruston advances to the quarterfinals where they will take on second-ranked Denham Springs on the road Thursday.