

Chiefs set for semifinal matchup with top-ranked Zachary Thursday

NATCHITOCHEs, La. - The fourth-ranked Natchitoches Central Chiefs will play in the Boys' Basketball Top 28 semifinals in Lake Charles's Burton Coliseum Thursday night at 8 p.m. against the top-ranked Zachary Broncos in the Division I non-select semifinals.

The Chiefs (25-5) enter Thursday's game steamrolling as they have won 17 of their last 18 games while earning the District 1-5A title in the process.

NCHS earned its way to the Top 28 with a bye in the first round followed by home wins over 14th-ranked Neville, 74-64, and 12th-ranked Covington, 79-62, to punch the ticket to yet another Top 28 appearance.

Natchitoches Central will look to senior point guard Jaden Braden and junior forward JD Demery to lead the way while sophomores Khaelyb Creighton and Harold Remo could both provide sparks. While Braden and Demery have been the leading scorers throughout the 2024-25 campaign, it was Creighton who led the way for the Chiefs in the quarterfinal win over Covington with 15 points while Remo scored 11. Duke Nelson also provided a huge lift off the bench scoring 14 points while three starters were in foul trouble

The Chiefs will be making their eighth appearance in the Top 28 in 13 years Thursday in search of their third state title. NCHS won two state titles in 2014 and 2016 while losing in the state title game in 2024, 2021, 2015. The Chiefs are 7-5 in the eight trips to the year's annual Final Four.

The Broncos (29-6) come into Thursday's contest with the Chiefs with some history of their own. Zachary won back-to-back state championships in 2021 and 2022 including a 63-57 victory over NCHS in the 2021 title game. The Broncos secured a spot in the Top 28 with a first-round bye before home wins over 16th-ranked West Monroe, 84-54, and 8th-ranked Sulphur, 78-62.

The winner of NCHS and Zachary will face the winner of second-ranked Central-Baton Rouge (25-4) and third-ranked Denham Springs (30-2) Saturday at 8 p.m. in the Division I non-select state championship game.

Fans can follow the play-by play of Thursday's game by tuning into 100.7 KZBL or listening online at KZBLradio.com. Live updates will also be available at the Inside Natchitoches Sports Facebook page. Fans can also watch the game with a paid subscription at the NFHS website at ([2025 LHSAA Boys Basketball Semifinals Natchitoches Central vs Zachary - 03/13/2025 | Live & On Demand](#))