

With leading scorer Maggie Phipps hampered by foul trouble, Jaedon Murphy stepped in and helped North Polk get what it wanted -- a berth in the state championship game.

Top-ranked North Polk jumped ahead with an 11-0 first quarter run and went on to beat Waukon 65-49 in the Class 3A semifinals. Murphy led the way with 22 points on 8-for-11 shooting as the Comets reached the final round for the first time. They'll take a 23-2 record into the title game at 8 o'clock Friday night.

Phipps, a sophomore who has committed to Drake, went to the bench with her third foul late in the first half and picked up her fourth in the third quarter. But she avoided fouling out and still made her presence felt, scoring 20 points and handing out a couple of assists.

With North Polk leading 34-22 early in the second half, Murphy drained a 3-pointer to start a 17-4 run that stretched the lead to 51-26. Murphy scored 10 points in that stretch and Phipps capped it with a 3 from the left corner.

North Polk held Waukon scoreless for 6:45 during its first quarter run, which erased an early 4-2 deficit. The Comets' lead never dropped below six points after that.

Maddie Ahlstrom and Lauren Griffith led Waukon with 12 points each and Griffith grabbed 12 rebounds. Annika Headington added 10 points, seven rounds and five assists for the Indians, who finish 19-4.

Waukon had been seeking its third trip to the finals. The Indians won the 3A state championship in 2004 and finished second in 2010.