

West Des Moines Valley had Zoe Young, Johnston did not. That's why Valley is going back to the Class 5A championship game.

Young scored 37 points, including the tying basket in regulation and go-ahead bucket in overtime, and Valley beat top-ranked Johnston 76-64 in an intense, back-and-forth semifinal before large, enthusiastic crowds from both schools.

With the victory, Valley goes to the championship game for the fifth time in school history. The Tigers, who won the 2017 title with many of the same players on this year's team, take a 19-5 record into the final game at 6 p.m. Friday. Johnston, unable to hold a seven-point lead late in regulation, finishes 22-3.

Young, who gets one more high school game before heading off to play at Maryland next season, scored on several strong drives to the basket and finished 14 of 22 from the field with three 3-pointers. She also grabbed 10 rebounds, handed out three assists and blocked four shots. And she played the final 6:31 of regulation and all of the overtime with four fouls.

Shea Fuller added 22 points for Valley in a solid performance that included 9-for-10 free throw shooting and Alex Honnold scored eight.

Regan Nesheim led Johnston with 26 points on 9-for-12 shooting and grabbed nine rebounds. Maya McDermott scored 12 for the Dragons and Maddie Mock had nine to go with 11 rebounds and seven assists.

Valley outscored Johnston 14-2 in the overtime after 32 minutes of regulation play that included several momentum swings.

With Young on the bench after picking up her fourth foul, Johnston opened a 52-47 lead when McDermott freed herself behind Nesheim's screen and hit a 3-pointer. Young returned moments later and in just 66 seconds, Valley had regained the lead. She drove for a layup, swished a 3 from the top of the key and fed Fuller for a 3-pointer, putting the Tigers up 55-54.

Johnston came right back with eight straight points for a 62-55 lead with 1:52 left, but the Dragons were blanked the rest of the way and Valley rallied again. Fuller's 3 got the Tigers to within a basket and Young spun through the lane for the tying shot with 1:13 remaining.

After Johnston turned it over working for a final shot, Young missed a runner just before the buzzer. But she quickly atoned for that, scoring 4 seconds into the overtime to put Valley ahead to stay.