

With Saint Ansgar doing everything it could to take away Montezuma's 3-point shooting, the Bravettes had to figure out another approach.

So they put it on Elise Boulton and she delivered.

Boulton scored 11 points in the final 6 minutes, 21 seconds and finished with 29 to lead sixth-ranked Montezuma past Saint Ansgar 50-45 and into the Class 1A semifinals. The Bravettes avenged a loss to the Saints in the quarterfinals of last year's state tournament and now face defending two-time champion Newell-Fonda at 4 p.m. on Friday, with the winner advancing to Saturday night's title game.

Montezuma came into the tournament second in the state in 3-point baskets and sophomore Mia Boulton tied for the state lead among individuals. Saint Ansgar face-guarded her all over the court, turning the contest into what amounted to a game of 4-on-4 and big sister Elise, a senior, clearly was the best of Montezuma's four.

With Saint Ansgar ahead 36-34, Elise Boulton scored the game's next six points to put her team ahead to stay, sinking four free throws and connecting on a floater in the lane for a 40-36 lead. Shanae Wetering followed with a pair of free throws and Boulton drove into the lane for another bucket to make it 44-36, giving the Bravettes the cushion they needed to hold on.

After Brooklyn Hackbart's 3-pointer cut the lead to 44-39, Montezuma finished it off by making 6-of-8 free throws, three of them by Elise Boulton, who finished 9-for-10 at the line, handed out five assists and made four of her team's five 3-pointers.

Wetering went 7-for-8 at the line and finished with 10 points and six rebounds, while Dylan Holland had seven points and eight rebounds. Mia Boulton, who had 72 3-pointers coming in, was limited to three shots and got her only points on a pair of free throws. Saint Ansgar ended up with seven 3-pointers, but Montezuma outscored the Saints 21-2 on free throws and the Bravettes held their own on the boards against their taller opponent. Hali Anderson led Saint Ansgar with 19 points, Hackbart had 14 points and 10 rebounds and Gracie Urbatsch grabbed 11 rebounds to go with six points. Saint Ansgar, which beat Montezuma 51-46 in last year's tournament, finishes 22-2.