

Nodaway Valley made quite an impression in the school's first state tournament appearance.

The unbeaten Wolverines raced to an early lead on the strength of their outside shooting, then made the plays they needed after that to beat defending state champion North Linn in the Class 2A quarterfinals.

North Linn made it back to Wells Fargo Arena despite returning just one starter from its championship team, but lacked the firepower to overcome its early deficit.

Fourth-ranked Nodaway Valley moves into the semifinals at 10 a.m. Friday against another unbeaten team, top-ranked Maquoketa Valley. Both are 24-0.

Freshman Lindsey Davis led Nodaway Valley with 20 points and made 5-of-6 free throws in the final 1:21 to keep her team safely ahead. She finished 9-for-10 at the line and added four rebounds, four steals and two assists.

Maddax DeVault added 17 points for the Wolverines, while Corrine Bond contributed nine points, eight rebounds, six steals and two blocks. Lexi Shike scored Nodaway Valley's remaining seven points and added to her line with eight rebounds, two assists and two steals. The Wolverines finished with 15 steals in all and forced 24 turnovers. Freshman Kamryn Kurt led North Linn with 16 points and Ellie Ware, the only returning starter from last season, had 12 points, 17 rebounds and six blocks.

Nodaway Valley hit four 3-pointers in bolting to a 22-7 lead early in the second quarter and never let North Linn get closer than five points after that. Every time it looked like the Lynx were about to get something going, they'd miss a shot or turn it over and Nodaway Valley would capitalize with a basket or draw a foul.

North Linn ended up shooting just 34 percent, including 2-for-15 from 3-point range. Still, the Lynx managed to cut the lead to 41-36 with 5:27 left, giving them plenty of time to continue their comeback. But Nodaway Valley answered with a layup from Shike and two straight driving shots from DeVault to hike the lead back to double-figures. The Wolverines did the rest from the free throw line, making 6-of-9 in the final 2:16 to negate North Linn's seven points in the final minute.

North Linn finishes 21-3. Its two other losses were to Maquoketa Valley.