

A torrid start sent Unity Christian into the Class 3A championship game.

The third-ranked Knights hit seven of their first eight shots in charging to a 22-6 lead and were never threatened in beating No. 2 Clear Lake 58-42 to earn a chance at claiming a third state title.

Sisters Gracie and Janie Schoonhoven again led the way as Unity Christian shot 54.5 percent in the first half and 47 percent for the game, connecting on a series of fastbreak layups, layups after steals and slick passes into the low post. The Knights piled up 36 points in the paint and outscored the Lions 16-0 on fastbreak points.

Gracie Schoonhoven, a sophomore, finished with 20 points, seven rebounds and seven assists. Janie, a senior, had 14 points and 10 rebounds for her second double-double of the tournament. The two combined to make 14 of 28 shots and they often feed off one another.

In once sequence, Janie scored on a fastbreak layup after a pass from Gracie, who then stole the ball, fed Janie again and followed up with a basket after Janie missed the layup. That restored Unity's lead to 20 after Clear Lake had pulled to within 14.

The sisters had combined for 47 points in a quarterfinal victory over Roland-Story.

Tyra Schuiteman added 11 points and eight rebounds for Unity, Tyra Hulstein scored six points and Jenna Bouma had five.

Kaitlyn VanderPloeg led Clear Lake with 12 points and six rebounds, while Jaden Ainley scored 10 points.

Clear Lake missed its first eight shots and once the Lions found their shooting touch, they had too much ground to make up. Clear Lake, which made it to state for the sixth time in eight years, finished 19-2. Its only other loss was to Class 4A Waverly-Shell Rock. Unity won Class 2A state championships in 2015 and 2016 and was the 3A runner-up in 2014.