

The Mount San Antonio College Mounties nearly were derailed in their quest to three-peat as state champions, as they overcame the valiant collective effort of the Fresno City College Rams, 89-83, in a semifinal game of the California Community College Women's Basketball Championships at Spanos Center on the University of the Pacific campus in Stockton.

Playing without the services of three starters (and the combined 39 points per game average that went with them), the pesky Rams (35-3, North No. 2 seed) gave it all they had and then some as freshman forward Lena Gipson was saddled with three personal fouls early in the first half.

That only caused sophomore guard Vanessa House to take over and get into a shoot-out with MSAC's sophomore guard Jazlyn Davis. House, who helped bring Fresno back from a 22-10 deficit and into a 36-32 halftime lead, thanks to a pair of last-minute three-pointers.

Mt. San Antonio (36-1, South No. 1 seed) regained the lead for good midway through the second half. In the final stanza, House tossed in 26 of her team-high 41 points, while Davis logged 29 of her game-high 44 points.

With the win, MSAC – the two-time defending state champion – advances to its third consecutive state final on Sunday, Mar. 16, and will meet the winner between Foothill and Pasadena City Colleges.