

Grundy Center reached the state tournament for the first time since its 2005 championship year, and now the Spartans get to stay a little longer.

The eighth-ranked Spartans survived a hectic final minute to beat No. 7 Iowa City Regina 46-45 and reach the Class 2A semifinals.

Grundy Center, with an all-junior starting lineup, never trailed after Brooke Flater drove for a basket to give her team a 35-33 lead in the final minute of the third quarter.

But it sure wasn't easy.

Regina, playing without injured center Alex Wiese, rallied from a five-point deficit to cut the lead to 46-45 on Mary Crompton's runner in the lane with 1:25 left. There was no more scoring after that, but plenty of action.

The Regals got a defensive stop to regain possession, but the ball spun out on Lauren Gaarde's driving layup. They got another chance after Grundy Center's Kylie Willis missed the front end of a one-and-one free throw and got three shots as the final seconds ticked away. But none fell and Grundy Center survived.

Willis led Grundy Center with 12 points and nine rebounds. Flater added 11 points and Hailey Wallis scored eight. Crompton's 20 points led Regina, which reached the tournament for the fourth straight year, and Greyson Dumont scored 13.

Wiese injured a knee in the days leading up to the tournament and it was a big loss for Regina. She was the team's second-leading scorer with a 15.4 average and the top rebounder at 10.6 per game.

Grundy Center made it to state in a year that former Spartans star Kim Van Deest is being inducted into the IGHSAU Basketball Hall of Fame. She'll be honored on Saturday night. Grundy Center will play second-ranked Treynor in the semifinals at 10 a.m. Friday.

Regina finishes with a 21-5 record.