

It took an extra 12 minutes, but the reward was no less sweet for Cascade.

The Cougars are headed to the Class 2A championship game.

Nicole McDermott scored 16 points and three teammates posted double-doubles to lift sixth-ranked Cascade past No. 10 North Union 62-53 in three overtimes.

Cascade could have wrapped it up in the second overtime, but missed the front end of three one-and-one free throw opportunities. The Cougars dominated the third extra session, however, and led the rest of the way after Rachel Trumm drove for a basket to break a 50-50 tie.

North Union was seeking its third major upset on the tournament trail after knocking off fourth-ranked Western Christian in regional play and No. 3 Panorama in the state tourney quarterfinals. The Warriors, in the state tournament for the first time, led for much of regulation but could not hold on.

Jordan Simon added 14 points and 11 rebounds for Cascade, Abby Welter had 11 points and 11 rebounds, while Trumm finished with 10 points and 13 rebounds. Anne Ryan scored 10 for the Cougars.

Welter, a sophomore, filled in capably for starting center Abbie Ruggeberg, who was held out for disciplinary reasons. Welter scored Cascade's first two points on a reverse layup and notched her teams final two points on a pair of free throws.

The Cougars finally settled down at the free throw line in the third overtime, making six of 10 after North Union cut the lead to 54-53 on Samantha Hagedorn's 3-pointer.

Hagedorn, Hallie Reese and Chloe Lofstrom each scored 13 points to lead North Union. Lofstrom also grabbed 13 rebounds.

North Union forced the third overtime on Lofstrom's turnaround shot with 15 seconds left. The Warriors had a chance for the final shot at the end of regulation and the first overtime, but McDermott forced a jump ball with 1.1 seconds left in regulation to thwart that attempt and Simon's steal broke up North Union's final play at the end of the first overtime.

Cascade is now 24-3 and will try for its first state title against No. 8 Grundy Center at 5 p.m. Saturday. The Cougars made the finals one other time, losing to IKM-Manning in 2009. North Union finishes 22-3.