

Clear Springs captures Class 5A, Region 3 Girls Basketball Championship

Written by Yolande Y. Lezine

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The third time was the charm as the Clear Springs Lady Chargers captured the Class 5A, Region 3 Girls Basketball Championship with a 55-45 victory over the Seven Lakes Spartans at the M.O. Campbell Center Saturday afternoon.

The third-ranked Chargers (38-2) advances to the state semifinals for the first time in school history. The Lady Chargers, who are the first Clear Creek ISD girls basketball team to win a regional title since Clear Creek did in 1994 under former coach Peggy Whitley, will face the Duncanville Lady Panthers (40-0) in the first Class 5A semifinal game at 3:00 p.m. at the University of Texas Frank Erwin Center.

The winner of this game will play the winner of the Pflugerville (38-0) vs. Cibolo Steele (32-5) game that will be held Friday evening at 8:30 p.m.

This was the third time that Clear Springs had made it to the Regional Tournament, and after defeating Bellaire in the regional semifinals, they were not going to be denied a trip to Austin against Seven Lakes.

The No. 22-ranked Lady Spartans were making their first appearance at the regional tournament. Seven Lakes, (33-7) rode their defense led by Northwestern signee Christen Inman, throughout the second and third quarters to swing the momentum slightly their way.

However, Tulane-bound Courtie Latham made sure that her team wasn't going to be denied, scoring 15 of her game-high 22 points, including back-to-back 3-pointers in the final period. Her

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basket with less than two minutes remaining gave the Lady Chargers a 49-41 lead which they would not relinquish.

“Basketball is a game of runs,” Courtie Latham said. “We got the last run of the game and we were determined to finish what we set out to do at the beginning of the season.”

Latham also added 10 rebounds and five assists in the game. Teammate and Texas-commit Brooke McCarty added 10 points in the game.

Seven Lakes were led by Inman who carried the team with 25 points and 10 rebounds. Teammate Sydney Buchel added 12 points and nine rebounds in the loss.

“Clear Springs is a really good team, “ Christen Inman stated. “Maybe our inexperience played a part, but overall I’m really proud of our team and what we accomplished this season.”