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## **Griffin, Canavan lead Lady Texans to Region 5 Championship game**

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LUBBOCK, Texas – The South Plains College Lady Texans (20-9) are one game away from advancing to the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) national tournament after defeating the Temple College Lady Leopards (21-6) 57-55 in the semi-final round of the Region 5 tournament held at Lubbock Christian University's Rip Griffin Center. Coach Wyatt's squad will face the winner of the 7 p.m. matchup featuring NJCAA No. 4 ranked Midland College and Collin County Community College.

The game was somewhat similar to last night's Lady Texan victory over McLennan Community College in that SPC took a five point victory to the locker room and then saw that lead vanish in the second half, although not by way of an 11-0 run.

SPC entered the second half with a 29-24 lead and extended it to 9 points with just under 12 minutes remaining, 40-31.

At that point Temple's Jessica Sommers, MVP of the North Texas Junior College Athletic Conference, led the Lady Leopards on a 12-0 scoring run by dropping in 10 points and even added a steal to not only move the momentum to her teams favor, but also giving them a 43-40 lead with 8 minutes and 30 seconds remaining.

After a Lady Texan timeout and then a series that included two trips up and down the court, SPC freshman Lorie Romaine forced the fifth tie of the game with her only 3-point bucket of the night.

The Lady Leopards responded with a 7-1 scoring run to take a 50-44 advantage with less than five minutes remaining on the clock.

Exactly one minute later SPC freshman Kelsey Canavan rebounded a missed shot by Christen McLee and had her attempt at a put back blocked. Canavan regained possession of her blocked shot and made her second attempt in the paint to bring SPC back to within four points.

Romaine then plucked the ball away from a Lady Leopard for her only steal of the night and was fouled on her way down the court, sending her to the line where she made 1-of-2 attempts from the line, bringing SPC within one score of forcing another tie.

With just over two minutes remaining in the game SPC sophomore Sajoyia Griffin showed the fans why she was voted MVP of the Western Junior College Athletic



Conference when she scored six consecutive points, ultimately giving the Lady Texans a 53-50 lead and allowing Temple only 24 seconds to respond.

Temple put the ball into the hands of Sommers who missed what could have been a game tying three point shot that saw Canavan come down with the defensive rebound.

Canavan was quickly fouled and sent to the free throw line where she was nearly perfect for the night. Canavan sunk both to make it a five point game, 55-50.

The Lady Leopards needed some help and nearly got it when Kenesha Rich made an acrobatic shot inside the paint and was fouled by SPC's Christen McLee. Rich missed the free throw, Canavan pulled down her 11<sup>th</sup> rebound of the night and Temple was forced to foul and send her to the line again where she put the game out of reach by making both and 7-of-8 for the night.

Sommers made a shot from beyond the arc as time expired and the game ended with SPC winning 57-55.

Griffin made 8-of-18 shots to lead SPC with 20 points while Canavan recorded yet another double-double with 17 points and 11 rebounds. The duo will attempt to lead the Lady Texans to a Region 5 championship at 5:30 p.m. Sunday evening.