

Saturday March 30, 2019

**Liberty 17, Sparks 10**

*Huge 2<sup>nd</sup> half leads Liberty past Sparks*

The Liberty and Sparks were engaged in a defensive battle during the 1<sup>st</sup> half of play, however, a run late in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter helped the Liberty seize momentum and clinch a spot in the championship game next week. At the end of the 1st half, the score was tied at 4. Neither team was able to break the pressure in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, as the scoring only happened in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.

The action picked up with 2 minutes remaining in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, with the score tied at 6. Kiyanna Harris had a monster quarter, ripping down 7 rebounds while scoring the go-ahead basket. Kiyanna was a defensive force in the quarter, ripping down rebounds with ease. This broke the tie, and gave the Liberty some life. After a steal by Alexis Juliano, Valentina Moscato hit an electric buzzer-beating 3 right before the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup>. This gave the Liberty an 11-6 lead heading into the 4<sup>th</sup>.

The Liberty seized the momentum and held onto it for the majority of the 4<sup>th</sup>. Molly Lyons (2 points, 5 rebounds, 2 blocks) and Raygen Manzare (6 points, 1 steal) each scored a in the final frame for the Sparks, however, it was not enough to come back. Liberty's Kelise Meredith (2 points, 4 rebounds) was huge in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, registering a basket, 2 steals and 4 rebounds. This opened up room for Alexis Julinao in the paint, who continued to attack the basket. Kaylee Julinao also added a basket.

Despite the loss, Sophia Wilson (2 points, 4 rebounds, 2 assists, 2 steals) had one of her best games of the season, consistently finding open teammates for good looks at the hoop. Taylor Sciandra also had a strong defensive game, grabbing 4 rebounds while recording 2 blocks and a steal.

The Liberty ultimately defeated the Sparks, 17-10. With the victory, the Liberty clinched a spot in the playoffs on Saturday April 6<sup>th</sup>, at 1 pm against the Mystics.