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Houston Hoops take ACC title

Tim Schultz

GOAZCATS.com Staff Writer

The 2008 Arizona Cactus Classic came to a close on Sunday afternoon and the Houston Hoops took home the championship with a 70-67 victory over the Compton Magic in the final game.



Tommy-Mason Griffin won the Arizona Cactus Classic MVP award.

The Hoops' 2009 point guard [Tommy Mason-Griffin](#) garnered MVP honors for the tournament and had 14 points, six rebounds and six assists in leading his team to the tournament championship.

Compton jumped out to an early 18-10 lead in the first half but Houston slowly crept back as the half wore on, finally taking the lead at 36-34 at the half.

The Hoops extended that lead after the half before the Magic got it together and came back to tie the game and the two teams were deadlocked at 59 and then at 61 points each for an extended period of time in the second half.

The tie was finally broken by Mason-Griffin at the 3:54 mark of the second half when he knocked down a big three-pointer to open up a three-point lead for Houston.

Compton missed the shot on the ensuing possession and the Hoops grabbed the rebound and attempted to take as much time off the clock as possible to try and seal the victory, taking advantage of the high school rules used in the tournament.

The Magic ended that by fouling and the teams traded baskets for the next three minutes before 2009 guard [Roberto Nelson](#) hit a big three-pointer with 17.7 seconds left, bringing Compton back within one point of the Hoops at 68-67.

Houston then got two points at the free throw line from 2009 point [Jamaal Fenton](#) to push the lead back to three points.

After a Houston traveling violation, Nelson ended up putting up a desperation three at the buzzer for the tie, but missed just short on the shot.

Nelson finished as the games leading scorer with 29 points and looked very good. He was hitting his threes and was aggressive on both ends of the floor all game long. Teammate [Joe Burton](#), a 2009 center prospect, also played very well and tallied 18 points and six rebounds before fouling out midway through the second half.

Aside from Mason-Griffin, the Hoops also got good games from Fenton, who had 18 points and three assists, and 2009 forward [Augustine Rubit](#), who finished with eight points and a game high 11 rebounds.

Both teams in the championship game faced tough opponents in the semifinals to earn the privilege to play in the final.

Houston saw a 12-point second-half lead erased in its semifinal by a tough Wisconsin Playground team. The game went down to the wire much like the championship game did with Wisconsin's 2009 point guard [Johnnie Lacy](#) missing a three-pointer with two seconds left to try to win the game.

The Hoops would prevail in that contest by a narrow margin of 53-52. Rubit had a very good game with 12 points and seven rebounds, both tops in that game.

Compton, on the other hand, didn't quite have as much trouble with its semifinal opponent the Northwest Panthers. The Magic held a 21-point lead with three minutes to go in the game but saw the Panthers roar back late, hitting four-straight threes to bring the score to 84-78.

Northwest turned the ball over trying to get off another three after a missed Compton free throw and would ultimately do them in as the Magic won 86-78. Nelson was stellar in the semifinal win, notching 35 points, four rebounds, four assists and three steals.