Cleveland State survived to play another day in the National Invitational Tournament.

With CSU leading by three with 4.4 seconds left, the Vikings dodged the bullet at the end as Vermont's Matt Glass had a good look at a game-tying three-point attempt from the top of the key, but it bounced four times on the rim before eventually falling to the floor.

Giving CSU the win, 63-60, Tuesday night at the Wolstein Center, in the opening round of the NIT.

The second-seeded Vikings (27-8) advance to face the sixth-seeded College of Charleston, who upset third-seeded Dayton on Tuesday.

The Catamounts, the American East Conference regular season champions, finished the season at 23-9.

It was CSU's first win in the NIT since 1988. The 27 wins are second-highest single season total in school history, trailing only the 1985-86 squad who won 29.

The win was head coach Gary Waters' 100th-career victory at CSU. He's 100-70 in five seasons at CSU and 271-205 in 15 years as a head coach.

They won again despite being dominated on the boards (45-29) and being outscored in bench points (28-7). Both statistics have been CSU's Achilles heel this season.

"That tells you how resilient our team is," Waters said. "They keep fighting regardless of size, regardless of anything. They are going to compete and give themselves a chance to win."

CSU overcame those deficits by causing 16 turnovers with their pressure defense, which led to a 16-12 advantage in points off turnovers.

"They had trouble handling our pressure," Waters said. "That's what won the game. Sometimes our pressure gets to people early, but today it got to them later."

The Vikings also made five more three-pointers then Vermont. CSU went 7-of-20 (35 percent) from three-point range, while UVM was 2-of-13 (15.4 percent).

The Catamounts held a 27-25 lead at the half as they shot 50 percent (13-of-26) from the field in the opening half. The Vikings would struggle in the first half as they shot 33.3 percent (9-of-27) against UVM's 1-3-1 zone.

The second half belonged to CSU's Norris Cole, as the Horizon League's Player of the Year, once again, carried CSU on his back. He scored 16 of his game-high 27 points in the second half.

Cole's lay-up with 1:27 left put CSU up for good, 59-57. Then he extended it to four on a pair of free throws on their next possession.

With five seconds left, UVM's Brendan Bald broke a CSU double-team and took an off-balance three-pointer that somehow went in to close UVM within, 61-60.

Cole then would calmly sink a pair of free throws with four seconds left, extending it to, 63-60.

"I go through my routine. [I] shoot the ball, follow through and it goes in," Cole said on shooting the clutch free throws down the stretch. "When you think about it that's when you miss."

On UVM's last second shot, they wanted to get the inbounds pass to Sandro Carissimo, according to UVM coach Mike Lonergan, but he fell down. So the second option was Glass coming off a screen.

"I thought when it came back it was going in, but it wasn't meant to be," Lonergan said. "We didn't want one of our guards to have it because their defenders are so good at the guard position. So we set up a screen for Matt and had a nice look at it. That's all you can ask for."

Junior center Aaron Pogue was the only other Viking in double-figures with 11 points. He also added eight rebounds.

UVM was led in scoring by Pat Bergmann with 16 points. They also had 12 from Luke Apfeld and 11 from Bald.

The Catamounts played without their leading scorer Evan Fjeld (14.5 points per game), who missed the game with a back injury.

CSU's defense would hold UVM to 34.4 percent (11-of-32) in the second half. While their offense started to figure out UVM's 1-3-1 zone in the second half as they shot 44 percent (11-of-25) from the field, including 5-of-11 from three-point range.

The date and location of CSU's second round NIT game against COC has yet to be determine, but Waters ended his postgame conference saying, "We are getting a home game," he said. "It's either going to be Saturday or Monday."