

Girls state soccer moving to Des Moines

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The Xavier Saints and Kennedy Cougars will not get a chance to defend their girls state soccer titles in Muscatine next year.

The tournament is moving to Des Moines for the next three years.

The Board of Directors of the Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union selected the James W. Cownie Soccer Park in Des Moines as the new home of the state tournament on Wednesday. The IGHSAU also reviewed proposals from the City of Muscatine and the Cedar Valley Sports Commission in Waterloo/Cedar Falls.

"We are pleased to bring the girls state soccer tournament to Des Moines," said Mike Dick, Executive Director of the IGHSAU. "This was an extremely difficult decision. Muscatine and Cedar Valley both have outstanding soccer venues.

"However, I have been impressed with the many improvements that have been made at the Cownie Soccer Park. It is a top-notch soccer facility and will be a great venue for state tournament teams and their fans."

Muscatine has served as the home of the girls state soccer tournament since the IGHSAU sanctioned girls soccer in 1998.

"This has been a bittersweet day. We are excited to bring state soccer to Des Moines, but we can't thank the city of Muscatine, Muscatine High School and the Muscatine Parks and Recreation staff enough for the outstanding job they have done hosting the state soccer tournament," said Dick. "We have built some great relationships with some terrific people over the last 15 years."

The James W. Cownie Soccer Park has 12 soccer fields. The four fields that will be utilized during the state soccer tournament have lights and the championship field has bleacher seating for 2,000 people along with a press box. Another field seats 750 people.

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The park has undergone \$1.8 million in renovations that include 12 completely rebuilt fields, new drainage, irrigation and sports turf sod. The park serves as the home venue for the Drake and Grand View University soccer teams. Cownie Park has also hosted the Missouri Valley Conference Women's Soccer Championships, along with NAIA men's and women's soccer championships.