

Cougars blanked by IC West; eye 3rd place

Written by Jim Ecker

Friday, 31 May 2013 19:22 - Last Updated Friday, 31 May 2013 19:26

DES MOINES - The Kennedy Cougars ended their quest for the Class 3A boys state soccer title with a possible concussion, a few ice bags and a heavy dose of frustration.

The Cougars gave top-ranked Iowa City West a stiff battle in the first half Friday but lost to the defending state champions, 2-0, in the semifinals at Cownie Park.

Kennedy (16-4) will face Johnston (19-2) in the consolation game for third place Saturday at 4:10 p.m.

"It's not exactly the trophy we want, but we've been in this position before," said Kennedy co-coach Steve Robertson. "We told them, it's a lot better to end your season with a win. Only two teams get to."

The Cougars defeated West Des Moines Valley in the third-place game a few years ago. Now they'll try to slay another CIML team in the consolation finals on Saturday.

Iowa City West (19-1) will meet Iowa City High (17-2) in the finals Saturday at 5 p.m.

For awhile Friday, it looked like Kennedy might upset the Trojans and reach the championship game.

"For 30 minutes, you would say we were the better team," Robertson remarked. "We had

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chances at their end. We kept possession, we knocked it around, we did everything we needed to do.

"But the one difference between the team that's playing for the title and the team that's playing for third is they took advantage of their opportunities."

Iowa City West took a 1-0 lead with 5:11 left in the first half on a goal by Jason Guymon. The Trojans made it 2-0 with 26:18 left in the game when Ben Troester found the net.

Kennedy goalkeeper Nathan Althoff made a good save on a hard shot by Ryan O'Deen, but the ball came loose and Troester was in the right spot at the right time for the putback.

The Cougars had their chances early, but Iowa City West was too tough to handle once it had the 2-0 edge.

"I thought we played fantastic in the first half," said Kennedy sophomore Ryan Walker. "We came out with the energy we wanted. We controlled the flow of play.

"We gave them that one goal and that kind of evened the playing field, I thought," he said. "From there we kind of lost our edge. I felt we fell apart a little bit. We needed to show more composure."

Kennedy junior Nate Waterhouse, who scored the game-winning goal in the first round against Sioux City West, did not play in the second half Friday due to a possible concussion. He appeared in good spirits, but the IHSAA trainer advised against getting back in the game.

Other Cougars ended the game with bumps and bruises, but they also ended the game with admiration for Iowa City West. The Trojans blanked Kennedy, 1-0, during the regular season and did not let the Cougars score a goal in 2 hours, 40 minutes of action this season.

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"Iowa City West is a good team," said Kennedy sophomore Sameeullah Jung. "I'm happy to lose to them rather than somebody else. I kind of hope they win the title.

"They won, they deserved it, I hope they win state. Their attack is phenomenal. I don't know how they do it."

Walker also praised the victors.

"They just have such a well-rounded team," he said. "They've got so much depth. Their starting 11 is fantastic.

"They have some fantastic players. And they play so well together. They move the ball around. They're the best team in the state, I believe."

The Cougars hope to finish as the third-best team.

"Yeah, we get to play tomorrow," said Jung. "Hopefully we'll end with a win."

BOYS STATE SOCCER TOURNAMENT
At Des Moines

Friday

Class 3A
Semifinals
Iowa City West 2, CR Kennedy 0

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Iowa City High 2, Johnston 1

Class 2A

Semifinals

CR Xavier 2, Pella 1 (2OT)

Storm Lake 1, Waverly-Shell Rock 0 (2OT)

Class 1A

Semifinals

Dyersville Beckman 3, Nevada 0

Iowa City Regina 4, West Liberty 0

Saturday

Class 3A

Championship

Iowa City West (19-1) vs. Iowa City High (17-2), 5 pm

Consolation

CR Kennedy (16-4) vs. Johnston (19-2), 4:10 pm

Class 2A

Championship

CR Xavier (13-5) vs. Storm Lake (15-1), 2:30 pm

Consolation

Pella (14-6-2) vs. Waverly-Shell Rock (13-5), 1:40 pm

Class 1A

Championship

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Dyersville Beckman (17-0-1) vs. Iowa City Regina (14-1), 12:05 pm

Consolation

Nevada (13-5) vs. West Liberty (10-7-3), 11:10 am