

## Cougars trimmed by Johnston at state

Written by Jim Ecker

Thursday, 11 June 2015 20:16 - Last Updated Thursday, 11 June 2015 23:47

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DES MOINES - Magic one year, heartbreak the next.

That was the story for the Kennedy girls soccer team at the Class 3A state tournament Thursday at Cownie Park.

Last year, the Cinderella Cougars wore the glass slipper and claimed the state crown with three impressive wins in a row.

This year, the Cougars lost to a team they beat less than three weeks ago in the quarterfinals of the state tournament on a wet day in Des Moines.

The Johnston Dragons edged Kennedy, 2-1, to send the Cougars home for the year with a 16-4 record.

Kennedy blanked Johnston, 1-0, in a tournament at Johnston May 23, but the rematch belonged to the Dragons.

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"It seemed like their defense knew where we were going and they had us marked up well," said junior Sydney Hayden, who led the Cougars with 16 goals this year. "It was a little harder going, but we stuck with it. I couldn't be more proud."

Johnston (14-6) took a 2-0 lead on goals by Megan Kimrey and Sam Birmingham. Kennedy got its goal on a free kick by Anna Frerichs with 7:40 left in the game to pull within 2-1, but the Cougars could not get the equalizer.

"It's always hard to beat a team twice," said Kennedy Coach Scott Myers. "They got a look at us, they saw what we're capable of."

"They played man-marking and tried to take our strengths away from us. And credit to them. They did it."

"We waited awhile to wake up, I think," said Myers. "I'm not going to blame us playing poorly. They played well."

Kennedy played the game without junior Morgan Petsche, who sprained her ankle in the regional finals against Cedar Falls Monday night. Petsche had a walking boot on her right leg instead of soccer cleats for the biggest game of the year.

"Morgan would have helped us a lot," said Hayden. "She keeps our mid-field contested and provides a lot of energy. It helps all of our team pick up"

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their energy together."



Petsche scored only three goals this season, but was a key member of the club.

"I don't want to use it as an excuse, but it hurts," Myers said of her absence. "You just don't replace a Morgan Petsche. You just don't. She's an amazing individual in our mid-field."

Kennedy won state titles in 2012 and 2014, which means the seniors on this year's club were members of a program that won two championships during their careers.

"I'm happy about that," said Alyssa Drewelow, one of the seniors who will play at Wartburg next year, "but I'm just disappointed for the freshmen and people who haven't been here before. They'll get them next year, though."

Myers is proud of what the 12th graders accomplished at Kennedy.

"I told our seniors the other day, they've left our program better than when they came in, which is all you can ever ask for as a player. And it's all you ever ask for as a coach," he said.

"They left it better than when they came in, and that's remarkable for them."

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Four of the seniors plan to play soccer in college with Drewelow headed to Wartburg, Melette Devore to Augustana, Abby Hellweg to Grinnell and Jessica Wagner to Coe. Myers is the head coach at Coe, so Wagner will play for him in college as well.