

Cougars nudge No.10 Muskies for state berth

Written by Metro Sports Report

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IOWA CITY - The Cedar Rapids Kennedy girls basketball team saved the Metro area from being shut out of the state tournament this year.

The Cougars rallied for a 54-52 victory over 10th-ranked Muscatine in the Class 5A regional finals in Iowa City Tuesday night.

Kennedy (16-7) drew the short straw as the No.8 seed in the state tournament and will face top-ranked Iowa City High (23-0) in the quarterfinals next Wednesday at 5 p.m. at Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines.

Iowa City High drilled the Cougars, 67-44, in a Mississippi Valley Conference game at Kennedy on Jan. 24 and features Haley Lorenzen, the likely choice as Iowa Miss Basketball this season.

Paige Hendrickson made two free throws with 11 seconds left Tuesday to give Kennedy a 54-49 lead against Muscatine. The Muskies (19-4) led by eight points in the second half, but the Cougars rallied and earned their first trip to the state tournament since 2010.

Hendrickson and Morgan Martin scored 15 points apiece for Kennedy. Jordan Holmes scored 11 points and Stephanie Botkin had 10 rebounds.

Emily Clemens led Muscatine with 19 points.

Kennedy was ranked in the Top 10 for much of the season, but lost its last three games of the regular season before winning both of its regional contests.

MUSCATINE (52): Clemens 7 4-5 19, Shoultz 4 1-2 11, Miller 0 0-0 0, Graettinger 4 1-2 11,

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Greenhaw 4 0-0 8, Meeker 1 0-0 3, Livermore 0 0-0 0. Totals 20 6-9 52.

KENNEDY (54): Meier 2 0-1 4, Holmes 3 3-4 11, Hendrickson 3 9-11 15, Botkin 2 3-5 7, Martin 7 0-0 15, Hayden 0 0-0 0, Langhurst 0 0-0 0, Milbrath 1 0-1 2, Vis 0 0-0 0. Totals 18 15-22 54.

Halftime - Muscatine 23, Kennedy 21. 3-point goals - Muscatine 6 (Shoultz 2, Graettinger 2, Clemens 1, Meeker 1), Kennedy 3 (Holmes 2, Martin 1).