

Kennedy-Jeff matchup highlights 4A pairings

Written by Mike Koolbeck

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The cutoff line has passed. The official announcement is a day away.

But that won't keep us from sharing our projections for the Class 4A substate baseball tournament pairings.

Based on the formula used by the Iowa High School Athletic Association* we have determined that four Metro teams will have home games when the tournament starts on July 15. This involves math, so I'm not claiming it to be correct to a tee (although my father was a math instructor (algebra, calculus, statistics -- not adding and subtracting), so I suppose I'm genetically predisposed. Of course my mom plays a role in this, too, and she didn't teach math).

Nonetheless, I feel comfortable with our projections.

Defending state champion Kennedy earned the No. 1 seed in Substate 3 and the Cougars will host sixth-seeded Jefferson at 7 p.m. This is the only first-round matchup of Metro teams. Kennedy beat Jefferson in the first round of the Bob Vrbicek Metro tournament May 23, and the teams play single games Monday at Jefferson and Tuesday at Kennedy.

Also in Substate 3, Xavier earned the No. 2 seed and will host fifth-seeded Dubuque Senior. Third-seeded Dubuque Hempstead must travel to Epworth to play No. 4 seed Western Dubuque. The IHSA has a rule that if a school's field does not have lights and it can not secure a lighted diamond with no further travel for the lower seeded team, the game will be played at the lower seed's field if it is lighted. Hempstead has no lights, Western Dubuque does.

Prairie and Linn-Mar are in Substate 2 and both will host games. Prairie won seven straight games last week to secure the No. 2 seed and will host fifth-seeded Waterloo West. Linn-Mar earned the No. 3 seed and will host fourth-seeded Cedar Falls. The top seed in this group is Mason City and the Mohawks will host No. 6 seed Waterloo East.

That leaves Washington in Substate 5. The Warriors have had a difficult season, with a

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coaching change on the second day of practice and their top pitcher playing for a travel league team in Chicago. Somehow, Washington has won 10 games, which is a tremendous accomplishment. And its reward is a No. 6 seed and a game at top-seeded Iowa City West, which was runner-up to Kennedy in last year's state tournament.

Also in Substate 5, No. 2 seed North Scott hosts fifth-seeded Burlington and No. 3 Iowa City High hosts fourth-seeded Muscatine.

The highest remaining seed after the first round will receive a bye in the next round and will host the substate final on July 20. The second-highest remaining seed will host the other winning team in the semifinals on July 18.

I tried to draw a flow chart, but I ended up with more arrows than Custer saw at Little Bighorn.

Here's an example from Substate 3: If Kennedy, Xavier and Hempstead win in the first round, Kennedy will receive a bye into the final and Xavier will host Hempstead in the semifinals.

The Class 4A state tournament is July 27, 29-30 at Principal Park in Des Moines.

* - A team is awarded four points for a win over a Class 4A team, three points for beating a 3A team, two points for beating a 2A team and one point for beating a 1A team. No points are awarded or subtracted for a loss. The points a team accumulates during its first 30 games, or if it has played fewer than 30 games through July 2, are totaled and divided by the number of games played.

CLASS 4A SUBSTATE PAIRINGS
(All games at 7 p.m.)

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First Round

July 15

Substate 2

No. 6 Waterloo East at No. 1 Mason City

No. 5 Waterloo West at No. 2 Cedar Rapids Prairie

No. 4 Cedar Falls at No. 3 Linn-Mar

Substate 3

No. 6 C.R. Jefferson at No. 1 C.R. Kennedy

No. 5 Dubuque Senior at No. 2 C.R. Xavier

No. 3 Dubuque Hempstead at No. 4 Western Dubuque

Substate 5

No. 6 C.R. Washington at No. 1 Iowa City West

No. 5 Burlington at No. 2 North Scott

No. 4 Muscatine at No. 3 Iowa City High

Semifinals

July 18

Highest remaining seed receives bye; second-highest remaining seed hosts remaining team

Finals

July 20

Semifinal winner at highest remaining seed

Hempstead plays at Western Dubuque because Hempstead does not have a lighted field.