

Lions top Cougars in bizarre match

Written by Tom Fruehling

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In a soccer match that almost ended midway in the second half when the lead official walked off the field, a stout defense by the fourth-ranked Linn-Mar girls prevailed in a 3-2 win Thursday night at Cedar Rapids Kennedy.

The second-ranked Cougars could have sent it into overtime, but a dead-on-free penalty kick by Emily Feltes with 1:27 to go was smacked straight into the clutches of Lions goalkeeper Rylee Frese.

“We had our chances,” said Kennedy assistant coach Scott Myers. “We had the ball inside the box right at the end, and you can’t ask for anything better than that.”

Kennedy head coach Andrew McKnight announced previously that his last game would be next week against Washington because he is joining the Iowa City Police Department. But Myers took the reins sooner than expected when McKnight was hit with two yellow cards for disputing calls and automatically ejected with 23:36 left in the match.

Immediately thereafter, the referee who made the calls walked off the field into the parking lot. Order was restored 15 minutes later when Kennedy athletic director Aaron Stecker coaxed him back into the game.

“We all wanted the game to finish,” said Linn-Mar Coach Steve Dickinson. “This was a game for the girls.”

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And players on both sides put up a spirited tussle throughout.

The Cougars (3-1) dominated the first 20 minutes, taking a 1-0 lead six minutes into the game when Annie Feltes plopped a pass right in front of the goal for cousin Emily Feltes to knock in.

The momentum shifted toward the end of the half, however, and the Lions (2-0) knotted the score with 5:07 to go as Kayla Kvach dribbled in a score when Kennedy goalie Olivia Weigel fell down.

“That was big to start off the second half even,” said Dickinson.

Linn-Mar scored next at 32:19 when Olivia Garcia took an assist from Claire Larson. Kennedy soon tied on Morgan Petsche's solo shot from the right, only to have the Lions go up 3-2 a minute later when Jensen Sevensen's free kick was finished on a header by Larson.

The two squads battled back and forth from then, with few shots at the goal until the Cougars' last ditch at the end.

For the match, Kennedy had 18 shots with 11 of them on goal. Linn-Mar had 10 shots, seven on goal.

“I thought we played really well,” said Cougar star defender Jordan Holmes. “We had plenty of opportunities. We just didn't finish when we needed to.”

The rivalry match marked the sixth year the two teams have designated it for cancer awareness. Between the two schools, students raised \$4,500 for local cancer efforts.