

Swede softball team falls in championship

Written by Greg Viergutz
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Luck not on Gothenburg's side in final game.

Sometimes Lady Luck shines on you and sometimes she doesn't.

Lady Luck apparently was looking the other way as Gothenburg dropped a 4-0 game to Scottsbluff in the finals Saturday of the Lexington portion of the Lexington-Holdrege Softball Classic.

The Swedes won pool play games against Chadron (9-0) and Blue Hill (7-0) the set up the championship contest.

Gothenburg, now 3-2, hosts Lexington Thursday and travels to the McCook Invite Saturday.

The Swedes play Gering at 10:45 a.m. Other teams in their bracket are McCook and Chadron. The bottom bracket includes Alliance, Cozad, Holdrege and North Platte.

Scoring flurry comes late

Pitchers Jordyn Haake and Amanda Barkmeier kept Chadron off balance the entire game allowing just one base runner past first base.

A slow start by Gothenburg offensively kept the Cardinals within striking distance, though, until the fifth inning.

A walk to Shelby Eggleston turned into a run later due to an error at first base.

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Eggleston added another single run in the fourth frame with her second home run in two games.

A two-out rally in the fifth inning pushed the lead to 6-0. Singles by Shay Wear and Karen Franzen sandwiched a pair of doubles by KaTrina Winter and Eggleston.

Gothenburg padded its margin with three more runs in the sixth. Wear's bases-loaded double powered the rally.

Haake was credited with the win while throwing three innings of one-hit ball.

Another slow start

Gothenburg's 7-0 win over Blue Hill mirrored the Chadron game.

The Swedes led by just 2-0 after four innings and then busted the game open with a four-run fifth frame.

Shay Wear singled in the first inning and then scored on a ground out by Karen Franzen.

KaTrina Winter scored the Swedes' second run after a leadoff single in the fourth inning. Despite two doubles and two singles, just the one run was scored.

Four straight singles fueled a two-out, four-run rally in the fifth.

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Jordyn Haake paced the Swedes at the plate and on the mound. She drove in three runs with a pair of singles. She also threw four and a third innings of one-hit ball for the win.

“Jordyn pitched one of her best games ever,” Swede coach Roger Neujahr said. “She kept them off balance. Her change-up was really working.”

Cats get all the breaks

In a tight contest against evenly matched teams, being in the right place at the right time can make all the difference. That worked to Scottsbluff’s favor in a 4-0 win.

Everything that could have happened in the right spot positively for Scottsbluff did and the reverse was true for Gothenburg, Neujahr said.

“Every time they had a runner in scoring position, they got a key hit,” he said.

Scottsbluff used a leadoff single, a sacrifice bunt and a ground ball to take 1-0 lead in the first inning.

The Bearcats made another leadoff single pay off with a run in the fourth inning.

Gothenburg loaded the bases with no outs in the bottom of the fourth but came away empty.

“Jordyn hit a high hopper that the pitcher snagged and threw home then (the ball went) to first for a double play,” Neujahr said.

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A few inches higher would have driven in two runs.

Payton Prall followed with a screamer right at the third baseman but it was caught.

“I don’t know if she put her glove up to save herself, but it went right there,” the coach said. “It seemed like it took momentum from us.”

The Cats scored a couple of insurance runs in the sixth inning.

Amanda Barkmeier went the distance in the loss.