

Softball team falls short of state

Written by Greg Viergutz

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St. Paul proved to be the nemesis for the Gothenburg softball team in its quest to reach the state tournament this year.

The Wildcats lost to the Swedes in the semifinals, but battled through the consolation bracket to beat Gothenburg twice and earn their first-ever berth at state.

St. Paul (19-7) won 10 games in a row before losing to Gothenburg in the semifinals. The Cats finished the season on a 12-1 run.

The Wildcats will face Friend (22-2) in the first round at state.

“If their pitcher has a good game and can pitch like she did against us, they’ve got a chance to win a couple of games,” Swede coach Roger Neujahr said.

Gothenburg closes out the season with a 17-12 mark.

Gothenburg 13-Minden 0

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Gothenburg had little trouble with winless Minden in the first round, taking a 13-0 victory in just three innings.

Jordyn Haake tossed a perfect game while not allowing a ball to be hit out of the infield.

The Swedes benefitted from 14 walks. KaTrina Winter had a double and a single to lead the Gothenburg batters.

Gothenburg 13-So. Valley 1

The Swedes' 13-1 win over Southern Valley went quickly, also, ending after three innings.

Gothenburg scored at least four runs in each frame.

Karen Franzen was the leading hitter with a double and a single. KaTrina Winter also doubled and Taylor Wolf had a pair of singles.

The Swedes took advantage of nine walks.

Amanda Barkmeier allowed just two hits for the win.

Gothenburg 6-St. Paul 0

Gothenburg played to perfection in the 6-0 semifinal win against St. Paul.

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“We had a couple of great defensive plays, got timely hitting against a good pitcher and had a great game,” Neujahr said.

It was a close game until the end. Gothenburg broke a scoreless tie with a solo run in the third inning. Shelby Eggleston blasted a triple to drive in Hanna Wolf who had walked.

Another single run was added in the fourth. This time Siera Schwanz reached on a fielder’s choice and eventually scored on a catcher’s error.

Gothenburg gained some breathing room with a four-run seventh inning. Brittyn Munster drove in the first run with a bunt single. Jordyn Haake stole home and Eggleston’s double pushed two more across the plate.

St. Paul didn’t put more than one runner on base until the sixth inning. Attempted rallies then and in the seventh frame weren’t successful.

“Amanda had her best pitching performance of the year,” the coach said. “She spotted the ball great.”

The sophomore scattered five hits while fanning eight Wildcats and walking just one.

Eggleston’s two extra-base hits and three RBI paced the Swede offensive attack.

“We got key hits and were smart on the bases,” Neujahr said. “We did great things with the glove. It was probably our best game of the year.”

St. Paul 6-Gothenburg 1

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Gothenburg's good fortune couldn't hold up through the three-hour break and into the initial championship game.

St. Paul regained its momentum and used an off-speed pitcher to baffle the Swedes.

The Wildcats breezed past Southern Valley 11-0 in the consolation bracket to earn the return game against Gothenburg.

St. Paul scored three runs on five hits in the first inning and it was clear the momentum had changed.

"Over the years I have seen it happen I don't how many times where the team that comes

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