

Swedes satisfied with fifth place at Cozad Invite

Written by Deb Egenberger
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COZAD—Getting three Swede wrestlers into the championship round at the Cozad Invite on Saturday was quite an accomplishment for Gothenburg.

The lineup of competitors included a host of returning state qualifiers and medalists among the 16 teams.

“I thought going in if we could finish in the top five it would be great,” said Swede wrestling coach Eric Manstedt.

Fifth is exactly where the Swedes finished with two weight class champions, a runner-up and two in sixth place.

Junior Mitchell Spiegel pinned his way to the title at 103 pounds, including a pin in the championship over Dillon Horstmann of Nebraska City.

“Mitch fought back when he needed to,” Manstedt said of Spiegel’s first-round match against Devin Ushio of Alliance. “He didn’t crumble and fold, he just came back strong.”

Senior Tre Ostergard also took the gold medal at 215 pounds.

“Tre gives up 20 to 25 pounds to wrestle that weight,” Manstedt said.

Ostergard found himself behind against Sean Neal of Sidney in the semi-final round and had to throw the kid down to get back in the match, the coach said.

He responded with a pin in both the semi-finals and the finals against Michael Gill of Ogallala.

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“Tre wrestled smart,” Manstedt said.

Senior Tanner Schwanz was the other Swede in the finals at 130 pounds.

Despite falling to Joe Tickle of Hastings St. Cecilia, the state runner-up in Class C last year, Manstedt said it was probably the best tournament of Schwanz’s career.

“He was really on the attack and got back to the takedowns he used to use,” the coach said.

In the championship match, the score was tied 1-1 going into the third period.

Manstedt said Schwanz hit Tickle with a lateral drop but couldn’t secure the takedown and keep Tickle in bounds.

Schwanz gave up a takedown late in the match to fall 3-1.

“You’ve got to have tough competition to make you better,” Manstedt said. “That’s what we got from this tournament.”

That was especially true in the 171-pound class with eight returning state qualifiers including Swede senior Kyle Demoret.

“For Kyle to get sixth in that weight was outstanding,” Manstedt said.

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And for senior Aaron Lauer to finish sixth at 189 was tremendous too, the coach said, as Lauer is at least 15 pounds lighter than every opponent.

“We hammered pretty hard this opening weekend,” Manstedt said of the three straight days of wrestling. “But the kids have to learn to keep that mental focus and make weight for three days in a row. We’ll do it again at the end of the year (at state) so they might as well get used to it.”

The Swedes head to Columbus Friday and Saturday for the 14-team Nebraska Duals.

Gothenburg is in a pool with Wayne, Millard South, David City, Blue Valley West, Plattsmouth and Neligh Oakdale.

The first dual begins at 1 p.m. Friday at Platte Community College.

“It’s going to be another tough weekend,” Manstedt said. “Not many of these kids are used to wrestling five times a day.”

TEAM RESULTS: 1. Aurora 181; 2. Hastings Adams Central 171; 3. Cozad 151.5; 4. Nebraska City 130; 5. Gothenburg 108; 6. Alliance 98; 7. Seward 95; 8. McCook 93; 9. Ogallala 89; 10. Hastings St. Cecilia 76; 11. Medicine Valley 66; 12. Wayne 52; 13. Sidney 49; 14. Lexington 48; 15. Minden 46; 16. Wahoo 23.

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