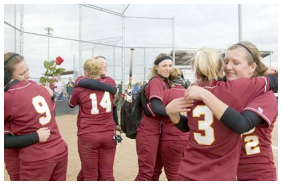

Swedes fall short of state tournament goal.

The C-6 district softball tournament began with raindrops on the faces of Gothenburg players, but tears streamed down their cheeks when it ended.

The Swedes beat Cozad for the first time since 2006, but they couldn't do it twice falling in the second championship game and failing to reach the state tournament for only the second time in school history.

Cold, rainy conditions greeted the players on Thursday with temperatures failing to get out of the 30s. The rain was gone on Friday but the cold remained.

"We prepared ourselves starting Monday that the weather was not going to bother us," Swede coach Roger Neujahr said. "I don't think it bothered us one bit.

"I never heard one comment about the weather from any of the kids."

Cozad went through the tournament in the winner's bracket, while Gothenburg dropped a second-round game to the Haymakers forcing an additional contest before the title game.

Cozad 2-Gothenburg 1

An early lead failed to hold up and several scoring chances slipped through the Swedes' fingers

in a 2-1 loss that ended Gothenburg's season.

The win sends Cozad to the state tournament with a No. 3 seed and a 19-6 record.

Neujahr praised Haymaker ace Carly Henry. She fanned six Gothenburg players in the deciding contest and gave up just four hits.

"I've got to give credit to Henry," the coach said. "In the game on Thursday night when they got up on us 6-4, I thought she threw as hard as she had any pitches in the game.

"In the final game, particularly in the last three innings, I thought she threw as hard as she had the entire tournament as well."

Some of the Swedes moved up in the batter's box and others moved back, but it didn't matter.

Gothenburg took a 1-0 lead in the first inning, scoring after a walk and an error.

The Swedes had several other opportunities later in the game with runners at third twice and runners at second four times.

“Failure to put the sacrifice or the bunt down properly hurt both teams throughout the tournament,” Neujahr said. “In fast pitch softball, you have to have those. Those (bunts) are the ones that make the difference.

“Failure to get the bunt down hurt us.”

The Haymakers scored all the runs they’d need in the third inning when Cozad put together three of their five hits for the game. Back-to-back singles scored one run. The second came home on another single.

Amanda Barkmeier relieved Bre Messersmith for the final four innings and shut down the Haymaker attack allowing only one batter over the minimum.

Gothenburg 5-Cozad 4

After falling behind early Gothenburg exploded for five runs in the third inning and then held on to defeat Cozad 5-4.

“We got a key hit at the right time,” Neujahr said. “We had good plays behind us and held them the last few innings and were fortunate to win.”

The big hit was a two-out, bases-loaded single down the left field line by Ali Abramson.

The Swedes pounded Henry for five hits in the inning and finished the game with nine hits. That’s quite an improvement from the one hit Gothenburg gained in the first game of the season, Neujahr noted.

“We knew we were still going to have strikeouts,” the coach said. The Swedes finished the

game with six Ks. “You just don’t face Henry and not have strikeouts.

“We said let’s cut our strikeouts down, get a few more hits, put the ball in play more and good things will happen. And they did.”

The Swedes prepared for the difference between the pitching of Southern Valley compared to Henry’s fastball by practicing in the batting cage.

“When we were ahead in the Southern Valley game, we subbed and had our varsity kids go over to the cage with the machine as fast as possible and get some repetitions there,” Neujahr said. “I think that it helped.”

Cozad took a 2-0 lead in the second inning and led 3-0 in the top of the third.

Anna Liebrandt, who went 3-for-4 in the game, led off the fifth with a double for Cozad and eventually scored. Two more runners were stranded.

Gothenburg dodged a potential problem in the sixth when Haymakers reached second and third before the rally fizzled.

Bre Messersmith went 2-for-2 along with a sacrifice bunt and a walk to lead Gothenburg at the plate.

Gothenburg 11-So. Valley 0

The Swedes had little trouble sidelining Southern Valley 11-0.

Gothenburg scored multiple runs in each of the first three innings before the game ended early after four.

Karen Franzen blasted two doubles in two trips to the plate and had three runs batted in. Jordyn Haake doubled and singled, while Vanessa Linegar hit a pair of singles.

Amanda Barkmeier held the Eagles to just two hits while improving to 6-1 on the season.

Cozad 6-Gothenburg 4

Gothenburg couldn't answer a Haymaker rally that led to a 6-4 win over the Swedes.

The teams traded momentum several times in the game. Cozad opened up a 1-0 lead in the first inning.

Gothenburg grabbed a 3-1 margin after three. Five singles and an error produced the runs.

The Swedes' margin grew to 4-1 with a solo tally in the fifth, but the team probably wonders about what could have happened.

Runners reached second and third before a strikeout and a ground out ended the threat and Gothenburg's last chance to score. The Swedes went down in order after that.

"We got up 4-1 and I think we panicked a little," the Swede coach said. "We're talking about 13- to 17-year-old kids and we panicked a little.

“We’re going to have some errors. That’s just human nature. We needed to score more runs.”

Cozad rallied in the bottom of the inning to tie the score. A couple of errors aided the two-run, two-out rally.

The victory margin came in the next inning when a single, a double and a sacrifice bunt did the damage.

Bre Messersmith paced the Swede hitting attack with a 2-for-3 effort.

Gothenburg 19-Minden 1

Gothenburg and Minden were in a tight game for one inning. Both teams scored a single run in the first.

The Swedes sent 14 batters to the plate in the second inning and poured on 10 runs to put the game out of reach.

An eight-run third inning added to the margin.

Four Swedes had two-hit games. Vanessa Linegar topped them all with a pair of doubles and two RBI. Gothenburg benefited from nine walks.

It's a painful finale for Gothenburg softball team

Written by Greg Viergutz
Wednesday, 14 October 2009 22:09 -

C-6 RESULTS

Blue Hill 17.....Southern Valley 12
Gothenburg 19 ..... Minden 1
Cozad 15.....Blue Hill 0
Southern Valley 16 ..... Minden 13
Cozad 6.....Gothenburg 4
Southern Valley 12 .....Blue Hill 4
Gothenburg 11 ..... So. Valley 0

Championship

Gothenburg 5 .....Cozad 4
Cozad 2.....Gothenburg 1

COZAD 2-
GOTHENBURG 1

	AB	R	H	RBI
Roni Putnam	4	0	1	0
Bre Messersmith	3	0	0	0
Payton Prall	0	1	0	0
Vanessa Linegar	3	0	0	0
Karen Franzen	3	0	1	0
Alisha Ballmer	2	0	0	0
Jordyn Haake	3	0	0	0
Brittyn Munster	3	0	0	0
KaTrina Winter	3	0	1	0
Ali Abramson	3	0	1	0
TOTALS	27	1	4	0

Pitchers	IP	H	R-ER	BB	SO
Messersmith (L12-4)	3	4	2-1	0	1
Barkmeier	13	1	0-0	0	3

The line score:
Cozad (19-6) ..... 002 000 0—2
Gothenburg (20-5)..... 100 000 0—1

GOTHENBURG 5-
COZAD 4

	AB	R	H	RBI
Roni Putnam	4	0	1	0
Bre Messersmith	2	0	2	0
Payton Prall	0	1	0	0
Vanessa Linegar	4	0	1	0
Hanna Wolf	0	1	0	0
Karen Franzen	4	0	1	0
Alisha Ballmer	3	0	0	0
Jordyn Haake	3	1	1	1
Brittyn Munster	3	1	1	1
KaTrina Winter	3	1	1	0
Ali Abramson	3	0	1	2
TOTALS	29	5	9	4

Pitchers	IP	H	R-ER	BB	SO
Messersmith (W12-3)	6	8	4-1	0	0
Barkmeier	1	0	0-0	0	1

The line score:
Cozad (18-5) ..... 021 010 0—4
Gothenburg (20-4)..... 005 000 x—5

GOTHENBURG 11-
SOUTHERN VALLEY 0

	AB	R	H	RBI
Roni Putnam	2	2	1	1
Bre Messersmith	3	1	1	1
Vanessa Linegar	3	0	2	1
Shelby Eggleston	0	3	0	0
Karen Franzen	2	1	2	3
Alisha Ballmer	3	1	1	0
Jordyn Haake	3	0	2	2
Brittyn Munster	3	0	0	0
KaTrina Winter	1	1	0	0
Shay Wear	1	0	0	0
Ali Abramson	2	2	1	0
TOTALS	23	11	10	8

Pitchers	IP	H	R-ER	BB	SO
Barkmeier (W6-1)	4	2	0-0	0	6

The line score:
Gothenburg (19-4)..... 353 0—11
Southern Valley (5-11) ..... 000 0— 0

COZAD 6-
GOTHENBURG 4

	AB	R	H	RBI
Roni Putnam	4	0	1	1
Bre Messersmith	3	0	2	1
Vanessa Linegar	4	0	1	0
Karen Franzen	3	0	0	1
Alisha Ballmer	2	1	1	0
Shelby Eggleston	0	1	0	0
Brittyn Munster	3	1	1	0
Jordyn Haake	3	0	1	0
KaTrina Winter	3	0	1	0
Ali Abramson	3	1	0	1
TOTALS	28	4	8	4

Pitchers	IP	H	R-ER	BB	SO
Messersmith (W11-3)	6	9	6-2	1	2

The line score:
Gothenburg (18-4)..... 000 010 0—4
Cozad (18-5) ..... 100 032 x—6

GOTHENBURG 19-
MINDEN 1

	AB	R	H	RBI
Roni Putnam	2	2	1	2
Payton Prall	1	0	0	0
Bre Messersmith	1	2	1	1
Liz Matthies	1	1	0	0
Vanessa Linegar	3	0	2	2
Shelby Eggleston	0	2	0	0
Karen Franzen	3	1	1	0
Taylor Wolf	0	1	0	0
Alisha Ballmer	2	1	0	0
Leah Schwanz	1	0	0	0
Brittyn Munster	3	2	2	1
Jordyn Haake	2	3	2	1
KaTrina Winter	3	2	2	0
Ali Abramson	1	2	1	2
TOTALS	23	19	12	9

Pitchers	IP	H	R-ER	BB	SO
Barkmeier (W5-1)	3	2	1-0	1	6

The line score:
Minden (5-16) ..... 1 00— 1
Gothenburg (18-3)..... 1 108—19