

Tough D, timely hit buries Minutemaids

Written by Deb Egenberger
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The pressure notches up a tick or two in softball extra innings.

Both teams start with a runner at second and, in most instances, at least one run is scored.

Gothenburg responded to that pressure Thursday against Lexington with some exceptional defensive plays and a timely hit to win, 4-3.

The visiting Minutemaids got the first chance to score in the eighth inning when that game was tied at 3-3 after the regulation seven innings.

Tracy Reynoso hit a line drive to left field and Kyndal Holmes raced in to catch it. She fired to second baseman Shay Wear to force out the Lex base runner before she could get back to the base.

Then, Ashley Eskew made a diving stop in right field to end the inning.

The plays in the field were all a part of an overall great defensive game for the Swedes.

“That was the best game as a team outfield that we have had at Gothenburg in the seven years I’ve coached,” Swede coach Roger Neujahr said. “Every outfielder contributed with some great plays somehow, someway.”

With the job done in the field, it was time for the Swede offense to step up.

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Kyndal Holmes started on second and went to third on a wild pitch. Katlin Harm walked and stole second.

Next up was Hanna Wolf. After falling behind in the count she knocked a game-ending single between left and center field.

“We talk about quadrants in batting zone 1 through 9,” Neujahr said. “She said it was right in the number 5 which is just about everybody’s favorite hitting zone.”

The Maids used a couple of singles to score one run in the first inning.

Four consecutive hits, led by Brittyn Munster’s triple, gave Gothenburg a 3-1 lead after three.

Lex scored solo runs in the sixth and seventh to tie the score and make it an extra-inning game.

“We had a couple of opportunities (in regulation) but couldn’t score,” the Swede coach said. “You’ve got to take advantage of those situations but we didn’t.”