IMPERIAL—With only three penalties and one turnover, the Swede football team played a clean game on a sloppy field Friday night in Imperial.

Unfortunately, the single turnover came at the most inopportune time.

It was second down with 16 yards to go during the third overtime period against Chase County.

Gothenburg had lost yards on the first play from scrimmage in the third overtime but looked to make that up and then some with a successful bootleg play on second down.

But when the ball popped loose, Chase County recovered and the Longhorns went on to kick a field goal for the 20-17 win.

“We didn’t move the ball as well as we have been this year but we should have been able to score more than seven points (in regulation),” said Swede coach Craig Haake.

The Longhorns played a different defense in the first half than they had shown on film and the Swedes had difficulty adjusting.

“The kid were confused,” Haake said. “We had kids turning people loose, expecting other linemen to pick them up and it wasn’t working.”

Despite numerous missed blocking assignments, the Swedes were able to score early in the first quarter.

A 48-yard run by senior Preston Franzen set up a 15-yard scoring pass from quarterback Blake

Ristine to Logan Koehler with five minutes left in the first quarter.

A PAT kick by Trenton Long gave Gothenburg a 7-0 lead.

The Swede defense stood strong against the Longhorns, keeping Chase County's first down opportunities to a minimum.

"Defensively, we played fantastic considering the number of different formations they used," Haake said. "I was concerned about the damage their quarterback would do and we were able to pretty much shut him down."

But offensively, the Swedes continued to struggle.

Twice more in the second period Gothenburg got within striking distance but failed to put the ball in the endzone.

The Swede attempted a 30-yard field goal right before halftime but a bobbled snap meant Long never got the kick off.

"We were up 7-0 at halftime and we felt like we should have been up a lot more," Haake said.

The teams traded punts much of the second half. Haake said on fourth-and-two from the Gothenburg 35 yard line with eight minutes left to play, Chase County managed to block a punt and recover.

"Luckily it rolled back to the 50," Haake said.

Four minutes later, Chase County tied the score 7-7.

Gothenburg had one more opportunity to win in regulation time with a 35-yard field goal attempt with eight seconds left but Long's kick sailed wide left and time ran out.

In the first overtime, Long hit a 32-yard field goal on fourth-and-8.

The Longhorns countered with a field goal of their own, which hit the bottom cross bar and bounced through.

In the second overtime, Chase County got the ball first and scored a touchdown with PAT kick after two plays.

It took the Swedes three plays to respond with a 3-yard pass from Ristine to Koehler and PAT by Long.

Gothenburg had the first possession of the third overtime but the fumble ended the threat. Chase County finished off the win with a field goal on third down.

"We out-yarded them by 100 yards or more," Haake said, "but we're still not getting enough scoring out of all that work."

Franzen led the ground attack with 91 yards on 14 carries. Koehler had four receptions for 38 yards.

Defensively, five Swedes finished with double-digit tackle numbers.

Logan Sheets had three solo tackles with 13 assists for 16 total.

Skyler Kottwitz added 12, Adam Speck had 11 and Ristine and Zach Wolf contributed 10 each.

Gothenburg moves to 3-3 on the season as the Swedes host 4-2 Ord on Friday.

Haake said the Chanticleers are a big, physical team that Gothenburg will have to attack with speed.

“At this point, every game is a big one,” the coach said. “We need to get a little of our swagger back if we’re going to get into the post-season.”

Gothenburg has qualified for the state playoffs for 10 straight years.

Friday’s kickoff is set for 7 p.m. in Gothenburg.