

Cozad boys beat Swedes with hot hand

Written by Deb Egenberger
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Haymakers use streak shooting to win

COZAD—Gothenburg boys basketball coach Roger Koehler expected Cozad's pressure defense Thursday night and streak shooting from the Haymakers.

What he didn't anticipate was that his boys would be taken out of their game from the start.

"They hit big shots on us early," Koehler said. "They were on fire."

Cozad started the game with a 14-2 run and the Swedes coach said the Haymakers were able to repeat with similar runs throughout the night.

In addition to spurts of scoring, Cozad kept the Swedes in check.

"They gave us pressure, pressure, pressure," Koehler said. "It was our first game without Aaron (Collins, who is injured) and he usually handles the ball for us in those situations."

Cozad pushed to a 20-11 lead at the end of the first quarter.

The Swedes clawed their way back into the game during the second period, pulling within five points with a couple of minutes to go in the half.

Another 7-0 run to finish the second quarter helped Cozad gain a 28-19 advantage at the break.

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“Our reoccurring turnovers and their hot shooting weren’t a good combination,” Koehler said. “When they hit shots, they hit in bunches.”

Cozad opened the second half with a pair of three-point shots to take any available wind out of Gothenburg’s sails.

At the same time, pressure defense that led to Gothenburg turnovers kept the Swedes from finding success on the offensive end of the court.

Cozad led 44-27 heading into the final period, which began with another 10-point Haymaker run.

“They played well and we didn’t have our best game,” Koehler said. “Cozad plays 10 deep and they shuffle kids in and out to keep the pressure on. They’re very balanced and that makes them tough to defend.”

Sophomore Tanner Borchardt led the Swedes with 15 points. Logan Koehler and Blake Ristine finished with eight points each.

Tyler Lauby was the leading scorer for Cozad with 10 points while Jacob Rush added nine and three other Haymakers scored eight each.