

Swede girls advance with 38-34 win over Ogallala

Written by Deb Egenberger
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It wasn't pretty.

At some points, it was even a little difficult to watch from the bench.

But Gothenburg girls basketball coach Chris Lecher said the Swedes' 38-34 win over Ogallala in the first round of the Southwest Conference tournament Monday night at home was just that—a win.

"We're not giving it back," he said, "no matter how ugly it was."

Gothenburg started slow, not hitting a bucket until nearly three minutes into the game.

Then about midway through the first quarter, the Swedes clicked for a little while and finished the period with a 13-2 run to lead 15-5.

It looked like Gothenburg might run away with the game as the girls continued to dominate, carrying a 26-17 lead into halftime.

"We weren't playing too bad in the first half but I could tell something just wasn't quite right," Lecher said.

The Swedes came out in the third quarter and scored a bucket and pair of free throws in the first minute and a half.

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Then the wheels fell off.



“I don’t know what it was,” Lecher said. “We were just blah. I haven’t seen them like that all year.”

After those first four points of the period, Gothenburg didn’t score again until the four-minute mark of the fourth quarter.

“I don’t know if the girls were tired or it was just so far out of our Monday routine but we couldn’t get anything to work,” the coach said.

In the meantime, Ogallala managed to whittle away at the lead.

By the end of the third quarter, the Swedes had only a 30-28 advantage and with six minutes to go in the game, the Indians took a slim 31-30 lead on a three-pointer by Jessica Paloucek.

The Swedes regained the lead with a basket by junior Regan Geiken, only to see the Indians come back to tie again.

With 1:14 on the clock, the score was knotted 34-34.

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Aryn Meisinger broke the stalemate with 32 seconds left and Geiken put the game out of reach for the Indians by making a pair of free throws with just 17.5 seconds on the clock.

Geiken led all scorers with 13 points, including five from the line.

Meisinger had 10 points and nine rebounds.

The victory takes the Swedes to 9-8 on the year and moves them into the semi-finals of the SWC tournament.

They will travel to Minden on Thursday to take on the No. 1 state-rated Whippets at 7 p.m.

The consolation is scheduled for 1 p.m. Saturday at North Platte High School with the championship at 4:30 p.m.