

Three dunks not enough momentum

Written by Deb Egenberger
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Gothenburg boys fall short at Minden

MINDEN—Gothenburg senior Logan Koehler got three chances to slam it home on the road Saturday night and give the ailing Swede boys a momentum boost.

But while the dunks riled up the crowd, they didn't provide enough pizzazz for Gothenburg to defeat Minden.

The Whippets defeated the Swedes 65-47.

The first time the 6-foot-7 post dunked the ball was during the second half of the second quarter when the Swedes pushed the ball quickly down the floor against Minden's press and Koehler got an open shot.

The point-blank bucket pulled the Swedes to within four points.

The Whippets clung to a 32-28 lead at halftime.

Koehler got two more dunks in the third quarter and forced a couple of Minden timeouts but the Swedes couldn't inch close enough to take over.

"We'd have some stretches where we were playing decent and I'd look up at the scoreboard," said coach Roger Koehler. "I couldn't believe there was still a pretty big gap in the score."

And besides the dunks in the third period, Gothenburg put only two more points on the scoreboard, trailing a sizeable 52-34 heading into the final frame.

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Logan Koehler finished with 18 points and 11 rebounds while fellow big man Tanner Borchardt had 11 points and 12 rebounds. Blake Ristine added 12 points.

“Our goal was to force them out of their press and we did that with a few easy buckets,” the coach said. “It was a definite improvement in effort from the night before.”

Koehler said he’d like to get his team healed up and full strength before the C1-11 sub-district. Before that, though, come a pair of Southwest Conference matchups to finish out the regular season.

Gothenburg, which fell to 6-12 with the loss, will host Ainsworth (13-7) on Friday and travels to Ogallala (2-15) for the final regular-season game on Feb. 15.

“I tell the kids it doesn’t really matter how you start the season. It’s more important how you finish,” the coach said. “We need to finish strong.”

Koehler expects Ainsworth to make plenty of three-point attempts as the Bulldogs average 35 or so attempts per game.

“We should be able to use our size to our advantage,” he said, “but we’re going to have to get out and cover the outside shots.”

Tipoff is set for 7 p.m. on Friday.