

Late basket gives Haymakers a win

Written by Austin Benson

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Haymakers rally to win in the fourth

A fan for either team could have walked into the gym at the start of the fourth quarter and left after the final buzzer feeling like it was worth the price of admission.

Cozad caught fire in the final minutes of the game to take down the Gothenburg girls basketball team, 31-29.

Gothenburg didn't allow a point to the Haymakers for a span of nearly eight minutes in the second half. During that Cozad lapse, the Swedes surged ahead on a 12-0 run before going on a four-and-a-half minute drought of their own.

As the Swedes found out, in a close rivalry game anything can happen. The Haymakers tied the game with three straight three-point baskets, the last with 5:33 left in the fourth quarter.

"Those shots were huge for them," head coach Chris Lecher said. "We fell asleep on defense."

Cozad managed to tie the game again with 4:32 left to play. The score was deadlocked again at 29-29 with 2:42 on the clock.

Each team gave away possessions with turnovers late, Lecher said. With 22 seconds to go,

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Cozad's Emily Reyes received a screen and knocked down the 17-foot, game-winning jumper.

Gothenburg had a chance at the end of the game. Lecher called for a screen on the back side of the defense but the pass never got there.

Up until the fourth quarter, head coach Chris Lecher said the girls limited anything inside and held Cozad's perimeter players in check.

As many rivalry games have ended, this one was exciting and hard fought.

Going into the contest, Lecher said he felt his team may have been overexcited to play the Haymakers.

"Some of the girls were worked up," Lecher said. "We didn't treat it like a normal game."

It was evident that both teams were nervous. Gothenburg didn't score a point until 1:25 left in the first quarter when Aryn Meisinger stole the ball and converted a layup.

Reyes hit a three before the end of the period to give the Haymakers a 9-6 advantage.

Struggles continued for both teams as Cozad made only two shots in the second quarter while Gothenburg had four girls score a basket apiece to tie the game at 14-14 at halftime.

Lecher said the girls were getting good shots during the first half they just weren't making many of them.

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