

## Swede girls hunted down in 1st round

Written by Austin Benson

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### Swedes get 10-day break to refocus

The two games between Gothenburg and Broken Bow on Jan. 24 and Jan. 28 had nearly identical outcomes, but flipped.

The Gothenburg girls basketball team won the first contest 41-24 but fell to the Indians in the first round of the Southwest Conference tournament 40-27 Jan. 28, four day after beating Bow rather easily.

“I don’t know what happened,” head coach Chris Lecher said. “We didn’t play with intensity all night and they hit some shots.”

To be specific by they, Lecher was speaking of Karly Boje who scored 22 points in 23 minutes of play a week ago on Tuesday compared to zero points in 13 minutes Jan. 24.

“I was telling our girls to not leave her (open) or she’d hit shots,” Lecher said. “It was kind of a double-edged sword after we worked on help defense in practice.”

Lecher added that he preached not to overlook the Indians just because of the previous 17-point margin of victory.

“We knew they were going to come after us and play hard,” Lecher said. “We had the mindset of playing well and moving on to the next round.”

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As bad as the final score sounds, it was a close contest until Gothenburg got outscored 18-5 in the final stanza, eliminating the Swedes from the SWC tournament.

The Swedes scored on their first possession but Bow answered with a two-point basket of its own and the Indians trailed by one after the first quarter, 9-8.

Gothenburg opened the second period with a half-court press which seemed effective against Bow for the most part, Lecher said.

“I thought the girls executed well defensively for the entire first half,” he said.



However, Gothenburg didn't capitalize on Bow turnovers getting outscored by three. A Swede turnover turned into a fast-break layin by Boje as time expired giving the Indians a 17-15 lead at the break.

Scoring lapses and multiple turnovers continued for both teams in the third quarter. Regan Geiken helped the Swedes keep pace with the Indians scoring the final six points of the quarter tying the game at 22 apiece.

Broken Bow knocked down two three-pointers and 7 of 11 free throws in the fourth period limiting the Swedes to two baskets and 1-6 shooting from the charity stripe

With 1:32 left in the game, Lecher pulled the starters and put in subs for the remainder of the game.

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"I could tell the girls were mentally done," Lecher said. "I probably should've pulled them earlier."

Seniors Emily Franzen and Regan Geiken each scored nine points to lead Gothenburg,

With a 10-day break between games, Lecher and the girls took a break from basketball hoping they would get their focus back, he said.

The Swedes play Valentine, Minden, Ainsworth and Ogallala before subdistricts.

"We will work on conditioning. It seems we've gotten tired at the end of the last couple games," Lecher said. "And we will continue working at the simple things: shooting, passing, defense."

Lecher said he thinks winning three of those remaining games is doable. Adding that he will try to mix it up against Class C1 No. 1 Minden to get the Whippets off their game, much like Gothenburg did in last years' conference tournament.

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