

Swedes control Cozad

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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After early run by Haymakers, it was all Gothenburg.

Gothenburg boys basketball players can puff their chests up and walk with a little swagger in Cozad for another year.

With balanced scoring and low turnovers, the Swedes defeated the Haymakers 55-40 on Thursday night at home to hang on to a decade of regular-season bragging rights in the long-time rivalry.

The last time Cozad's boys beat Gothenburg on the basketball court in head-to-head action was the 1999-2000 season.

Kent Koehn didn't want to be the coach to break that trend.

"I think in a rivalry game, the kids tend to get a little more focused on the details," Koehn said. "I told them before the game to expect to get Cozad's best shot."

Things didn't start too well for the Swedes as Gothenburg let Cozad jump out to a 10-2 lead.

"I think Cozad hit five straight shots," Koehn said. "It was bam, bam, bam and they were up 10-2."

The coach said he considered calling a timeout at that point and he figures everyone in the

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stands wondered why he didn't.

"Sometimes you just have to see what your team is made of," he said. "You can't hold their hand through every little thing."



As it ended up, he didn't need to. The Swedes settled into a rhythm and turned the tide.

"We not only turned the game around but we took control," Koehn said.

With a pair of consecutive fast break buckets by senior Mark Hilderbrand, the Swedes gained enough momentum to take an 11-10 lead at the end of the first period.

Then Gothenburg held Cozad to just two points in the second quarter.

"In about the last 12 minutes of the first half, we went on a 20-2 run," Koehn said. "It all fell together."

At halftime the Swedes led 22-12.

In the third period, Koehn said the boys realized that if they ran their offensive plays through each option a couple of times, they would find open shooters.

And it wasn't always the same player to hit the bucket.

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“It’s nice to see more balanced scoring,” Koehn said. “When you can get more than one kid scoring in double figures, that makes you a more difficult team to defend.”

Landen Haake and Derek Franzen each finished with 13 points. Hilderbrand added 12 points and four other Gothenburg players contributed to the final score.

Korey Ahlenstorf and Patrick Reeves pulled down six rebounds apiece.

“This is a good win for us,” Koehn said. “We needed to get some confidence heading into the conference tournament.”

The Swedes are 6-6 on the season.

| GOTHENBURG 55 | | COZAD 46 | |
|----------------|---------------------|----------|----------------|
| GOTH | FG FT AS Rk PT | COZAD | FG FT AS Rk PT |
| K. Ahlenstorf | 3-6 1-3 1 6 7 | | |
| A. Collins | 1-4 0-0 0 2 2 | | |
| J. Duffley | 0-0 0-0 0 1 0 | | |
| D. Franzen | 5-9 3-3 1 2 13 | | |
| L. Haake | 4-11 4-4 6 13 | | |
| M. Hilderbrand | 5-6 1-1 4 2 12 | | |
| P. Reeves | 3-5 0-0 4 6 6 | | |
| T. Sheets | 0-0 0-0 3 1 0 | | |
| J. Tabor | 1-4 0-0 0 3 2 | | |
| TOTALS | 22-47 9-11 19 28 55 | | |

Three-pointers: Gothenburg, Landen Haake, J. Mark Hilderbrand, 1.
Field goals: Gothenburg, 22-47, 47%
Free throws: Gothenburg, 9-11, 82%
Rebounds: Gothenburg, 5 offensive, 23 defensive, 28 total.
Turnovers: Gothenburg, 15.
Scoring by quarters:
Cozad.....10 2 12 16-40
Gothenburg.....11 11 18 15-55