Gothenburg handles Valentine.

Eleven days is a long time between basketball games, especially when the end of the season is just around the corner.

Swede boys coach Kent Koehn said the gap between the first round of the Southwest Conference tournament and Friday's game with Valentine made it feel similar to the first game of the year.

"We came out with a lot of energy and maybe a little nerves," Koehn said. "We had quite a few turnovers early. I think that was just a matter of getting back into the swing of things at game speed."

It didn't take long for the Swedes to hit their stride, though, as Gothenburg handled Valentine 64-48.

Despite some early frustration, the Swedes managed to set the tone in the first period, leading the Badgers by as many as eight.

"They were trying to deny our wings," Koehn said. "They wanted to get a quick steal. When that didn't happen, we were able to work for an open shot."

But turnovers hampered the Swedes a bit in the opening minutes.

“They weren’t pressuring us that much,” Koehn said. “I think sometimes we took more risks than necessary.”

GOTHENBURG 64, VALENTINE 48

GOTH	FG	FT	PF	Rb	PT
K. Ahlenstorf	1-1	0-1	2	6	2
A. Collins	3-3	0-1	4	5	6
B. Dockwailer	0-0	2-2	0	1	2
J. Dudley	2-4	0-0	2	3	4
D. Franzen	3-6	0-0	0	4	6
L. Haake	10-19	5-7	3	5	26
M. Hildertrand	3-7	0-2	2	2	6
B. McMichael	0-1	1-2	0	1	1
C. Ostergard	0-1	1-2	0	1	1
P. Reeves	3-3	0-0	1	3	6
T. Sheets	0-2	0-0	2	1	0
J. Teahon	1-5	1-2	1	2	4
TOTALS	26-52	10-19	17	34	64

Three-pointers: Gothenburg, Joel Teahon, 1; Landen Haake, 1; Valentine Scott Murphy, 1; Caleb Kluender, 1; Marshall Miller, 1.

Field goals: Gothenburg, 26-52, 50%; Valentine, 18-59, 31%.

Free throws: Gothenburg, 10-19, 53%; Valentine, 9-20, 45%.

Fouls: Gothenburg, 17; Valentine, 18.

Rebounds: Gothenburg, 5 offensive, 29 defensive, 34 total.

Turnovers: Gothenburg, 23.

Scoring by quarters:

Valentine	11	10	12	15—48
Gothenburg	15	19	19	11—64

After leading 13-5 with just over two minutes to play in the first quarter, Gothenburg battled a Valentine comeback.

With a three-pointer by Scott Murphy at the buzzer, Valentine narrowed the margin to 15-11.

“We were getting in the paint whenever we wanted,” Koehn said. “Still, we’re throwing up three-pointers and giving up rebounds.”

The Badgers cut the lead to two points to open the second period on a jump shot by Matt Harris. That’s as close as the score got the entire game.

Gothenburg led 34-21 at halftime and pushed the advantage to as many as 20 points in the third period.

Landen Haake was the leading scorer for Gothenburg with 26 points. He also had eight assists, four steals and five rebounds.

Korey Ahlenstorf pulled down a team-high six rebounds.

“When we were patient, waiting for the open shots, we got just what we wanted,” Koehn said. “Then when things seemed to come too easy, we sometimes got in a hurry.”

There were a lot of good things that came out of the game, not the least of which is the confidence that comes from winning, Koehn said.

“But we’ve still got plenty of work to do,” he said. “We want to be playing our best ball in a couple of weeks.”

The goal, he said, is to put together four full quarters.

“We’ve played good quarters and good halves but not a complete game,” he said. “Friday was the closest we’ve come and we took a step forward. We just have to keep moving in the right direction.”

The Swedes improve to 7-9 on the season. They get another short break, playing again at Ainsworth on Friday.

“It’s good in a way because we can focus all of our energy on one game and have a week to recuperate,” Koehn said. “The drawback is you risk losing a little of that competitive edge.”

The coach said playing at Ainsworth can be tough if the Bulldogs are shooting well.

Ainsworth is 11-7 on the year.

The only other regular-season game remaining for the Swedes is Ogallala at home on Feb. 19.