

Comeback rally falls short

Written by Deb Egenberger

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Swede boys finish regular season 7-11.

With a 12-point deficit at halftime, things didn't look too promising for the Swede boys to end the regular season on a high note against Ogallala Friday night.

"They were so disciplined on offense," Gothenburg coach Kent Koehn said of the Indians. "They worked the ball around until they got the shot they wanted."

That's how the 10-10 Indians stayed on top of the Swedes for a 55-53 victory.

That's not how Ogallala looked, though, in the final couple minutes of the game.

After leading 10-9 at the end of the first quarter, Ogallala stretched its advantage to 29-17 at halftime and continued to have the upper hand through the third quarter.

With a 41-34 lead heading into the final period, Koehn said Ogallala got comfortable.

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The Swedes, on the other hand, decided they weren't going out without a fight.



Down nine points with 1:47 left on the clock, Ogallala called a timeout.

"I just told the kids to be focused and to stay disciplined," Koehn said.

On the next three Ogallala possessions, Gothenburg pressed full court and forced three straight turnovers.

"I don't think they even made it past half-court," Koehn said. "Trouble is, we scored zero points off those."

Unable to convert, Gothenburg had to keep the pressure on.

When the clock had ticked down to 35.6 seconds, Koehn called his own timeout with his team down four points.

"We found a way to force Ogallala to play a little out of control," Koehn said. "And at the same time, I think our kids were playing with a sense of urgency. They were willing to try and do whatever it took to win."

With roughly 17 seconds left on the clock, Gothenburg ran a pick-and-roll play from Landen Haake to Patrick Reeves that earned Reeves an easy layup.

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That put the Swedes down two points.

When Ogallala didn't score on the next possession, Koehn called his last timeout with 8.1 ticks left on the clock.

"I wanted to trap before we had to foul," the coach said. "I thought a quick trap might cause a kid to panic and throw the ball away."

Gothenburg managed a trap on the inbounds play but the Ogallala player bent over and curled around the ball. The foul, Koehn said, wasn't whistled until one second remained.

"We got exactly what we wanted," he said. "The whistle just came a little late."

Despite both Ogallala free throws falling short, one second did not give the Swedes enough time to pull off the victory.

"I am so proud of these kids for fighting back," Koehn said. "Most of the time they haven't believed they could come back and win. This time they believed, we just didn't get the shots we needed to fall."

Gothenburg shot well at 49% hitting 22-of-45 field goals, a mark the Swedes have struggled to hit lately.

Haake led the way with 15 points, eight assists and five rebounds.

Derek Franzen added 10 points to the balance as all nine Swedes to play contributed to the score.

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Gothenburg finished the regular season with a 7-11 record heading into the C1-11 sub-district at Lexington Tuesday night. The Swedes faced Kearney Catholic (15-7) in the first round. Look for complete coverage next week.

GOTHENBURG 52		HERSHEY 46	
GOTH	FG FT	HR	PT
K. Ahlendorf	2-3 0-0	0	4
A. Collins	1-1 0-0	1	2
J. Dudley	1-2 0-0	0	7
D. France	5-10 0-0	2	10
L. Haake	5-15 5-8	5	15
M. Hildebrand	2-4 1-3	5	5
P. Reeves	3-5 1-1	0	7
T. Sheets	1-2 0-0	1	3
J. Taboon	2-3 0-0	1	5
TOTALS	22-45 7-10	16	53

Three-pointers: Gothenburg, Joel Teston, 1; Tyler Sheets, 1.
Field goals: Gothenburg, 22-45, 49%
Free throws: Gothenburg, 7-10, 70%
Rebounds: Gothenburg, 7 offensive, 9 defensive, 16 total.
Turnovers: Gothenburg, 17.
Scoring by quarter:
Opalala 10 19 12 14-55
Gothenburg 9 8 17 19-53