Four state qualifiers return.

With outstanding athletes like Emily Max and Ali Abramson returning to the track this spring, Gothenburg girls coach Steve Reeves knows the Swedes will have a competitive team.

Both senior girls return as state qualifiers in three events each and join a group of 10 other letter winners to lead the Swedes this season.

“Ali and Emily gave great effort every meet last year,” Reeves said.

Abramson ran both distance races in Omaha as well as the 4x400 relay.

Max finished third in Class B in the 300-meter hurdles and was a member of both the 4x100 and 4x400 relay teams.

“We expect good things out of them again and hopefully Tabitha (Paul) and Joslyn (Oliver) are healthy and can help us out too,” Reeves said.

Both Paul and Oliver qualified for state last season as well but both also battled injuries since then.

GIRLS TRACK SCHEDULE

March 19—UNK Indoor at Kearney, 1 p.m.
March 30—Cozad Quad (r), 4:30 p.m.
April 1—Ogallala Invite, 9:30 a.m. MT
April 6—Lexington/North Platte triangular at Lexington (r), 4:30 p.m.
April 9—Broken Bow Invite, 2:30 p.m.
April 13—Dawson County at Lexington, 4:30 p.m.
April 16—DUTCH ZORN INVITE, here, 2 p.m.
April22—GOTHENBURG/BRADY INVITE, 3 p.m.
April 23—Don Bader Invite at Lexington, 12:30 p.m.
April 27—Broken Bow Invite (9th-10th), 4 p.m.
May 1—Southwest Conference at Ainsworth, 11 a.m.
May 4—North Platte Invite (9th-10th), 10 a.m.
May 4—Best of Midwest at Sutherland, 3 p.m.
May 7—Cozad Invite, 4 p.m.
May 13—B-6 District at Scottsbluff, TBA
May21-22—State meet at Omaha, TBA

"The key for the girls team is going to be getting younger kids to step up and fill varsity roles," Reeves said.

That expectation isn't too far fetched. Reeves said there is plenty of talent on the team, just not much experience.

Of the 33 girls out for track, only four are seniors. Twelve come from the freshman class.

"We've got good kids in several events," Reeves said of the team's strength, "but depth will be an issue."

Hopefully, he said, that will improve as the season goes on.

The Swede girls defeated Broken Bow in the Southwest Conference meet last spring.

Reeves said while the Indians lost several of their top athletes, they will likely be among the best of the conference again.

Minden's girls have seen plenty of success in athletics this year. Reeves said the Whippets will also prove to be tough in the conference.

Gothenburg girls remain in the B-6 district, held this year in Scottsbluff.

McCook won the district team title in 2009 with Gothenburg second and Scottsbluff third.

All three teams remain in the district, along with Alliance, Chadron, Gering, Mitchell, Ogallala, Sidney and Valentine.

The season opens for the Swedes this week with the Class B portion of the University of Nebraska at Kearney Indoor Invite at Cushing Coliseum at 1 p.m. on Friday.

Then the girls take a week off before heading outside for the Ogallala Invite on April 1.

Reeves said practice has not been what he had hoped so far as weather has not been cooperative.

“We’re sure glad to be getting outside this week,” he said.

Members of the 2010 Swede girls track team are (*denotes letter winner):

SENIORS—Ali Abramson*, Emily Max*, Tabitha Paul*, Kira Peterson*.

JUNIORS—Abby Ambler*, Ali Clark*, Karen Franzen*, McKenzie Geiken*, Adrienne Massie, Joslyn Oliver*, Megan Portiner, Janae Wiggins*.

SOPHOMORES—Saraid Baca, Makayla Franzen, Erica Houchin, Casey James, Crystal Moore, Kersten Nelson*, Sydney Parsons, Payton Prall*, Kelsey Wahlgren.

FRESHMEN—Maddy Costello, Kenzi Hiebner, Morgan Kowalewski, MacKinzie Ostendorf, Danielle Schriver, Carlie Stevens, Siera Schwanz, Heidi Teahon, Jacey Wiggins, Hanna Wolf, Taylor Wolf, Shay Wear.

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