

Swedes finish fifth at SWC volleyball tournament

Written by Deb Egenberger
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Volleyball team will spend week tweaking.

BROKEN BOW—Mary Clark wants two serves back from the Southwest Conference tournament in Broken Bow on Saturday.

With 23 points on the board against Cozad in the first set, the Swedes needed just two serves and two points to start the tournament on a roll.

Instead, Clark said, two missed serves cost them the opening set and possibly the opening game.

“We should have won that first game and had some momentum,” the coach said. “Instead we gave it away.”

Cozad beat Gothenburg in the opening round of the 2009 tournament 25-23, 16-25, 25-15.

“We were very sluggish and out of sync,” Clark said. “We weren’t using the free balls they gave us and we were getting caught out of position.”

Senior Emily Max had 17 kills against the Haymakers but it wasn’t enough for the win.

Had the first set gone the other way, Clark said she believes Gothenburg would have beaten the Haymakers and met Minden in the second round.

“We were the third seed,” Clark said. “We really wanted a chance to play Minden.”

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As it was, the loss sent Gothenburg into the consolation bracket, playing for fifth place.

The Swedes defeated Ainsworth in their second match 25-18, 25-18 and then beat Valentine 25-14, 24-26, 25-17.

“The girls collected themselves,” Clark said. “We did a better job of running our pass, set, spike offense and playing efficiently.”

Kira Peterson scored eight service points against Ainsworth and 11 against Valentine.

Max put down seven kills and seven blocks against the Bulldogs and had another big game at the net opposite Valentine with 16 kills.

“We did OK against Valentine but a lot of our hits just weren’t going down,” Clark said. “They did a good job defensively and we had to work harder.”

Complete individual statistics were not available.

Minden took the team title of the SWC tournament with a two-set championship win over Ogallala. Broken Bow finished third after defeating Cozad, also in two sets.

The Swedes will have a week off as they won’t play again until Tuesday when they host Minden and Axtell in a triangular on Sept. 22.

“It comes at a good time,” Clark said. “It gives us a chance to tweak some things and refocus.”

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The triangular begins at 5 p.m. Tuesday.