

Swedes sharp in all phases of win

Written by Greg Viergutz

Thursday, 23 September 2010 21:20 -



Gothenburg put together a complete game Thursday for a 5-3 victory over Holdrege, avenging an earlier loss to the Dusters.

The Swede softball squad experienced difficulty recently maintaining a lead. They hung on this time thwarting a couple of Duster rally attempts.

“I thought it was a very good overall game—offense and defense,” coach Roger Neujahr said. “Against good competition you are only going get so many opportunities. I thought we took advantage of those opportunities and were able to score five runs. Hopefully with five runs that’s enough for us to win ball games.”

This week it was thanks to some exceptional defensive play and good pitching by Amanda Barkmeier.

Holdrege took a 1-0 lead in the first inning, capitalizing on a walk and an error.

Gothenburg went down in order in the bottom of the inning but rallied for three runs in the second.

Karen Franzen singled to start the inning. Jaci Gillespie reached high to snag a line drive by Barkmeier for the first out before Payton Prall reached on an error.

Hannah Wolf jumped on the first pitch to double in pinch runner Leah Schwanz. Both Barkmeier and Wolf came home on a wild pitch followed by a catcher’s error.

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Three hits, including RBI singles by Barkmeier and Prall, pushed the Swede lead to 5-1 after three.

A double play in the fifth inning kept Holdrege from rallying. Shelby Eggleston's exceptional catch in the sixth helped to limit the Dusters to just two runs.

"If Shelby doesn't make that catch, both of those runs are scoring and that hitter is probably on second or third," he said. "That was a huge play at the time."

Holdrege threatened again in the seventh when a couple of singles put runners at the corners. Shay Wear caught a fly ball in right field for the final out, though.

Neujahr said a tougher schedule has made the squad better even though more losses may result.

"I believe this is the best competition that Gothenburg has seen in six years with the Class B schedule that we have had," he said. Class B opponents include Holdrege, Scottsbluff, Gering, McCook, Cozad and Grand Island Northwest.

"Hopefully we've been able to handle the adversity of losing some of those games that will make us better in two weeks," he said. "That's what we've been shooting for."

Gothenburg, now 9-7 for the season, hosted St. Paul Tuesday and travels to Ogallala Thursday for a double header against Gering and Scottsbluff.

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The Swedes host the Gothenburg Invitational Saturday (see info box on page B1).

The Northwest Invitational scheduled for last Saturday was rained out.