

Swede boys make strides at Minden

Written by Deb Egenberger

Friday, 11 February 2011 14:42 -

It was the same team of Swede boys and the same uniforms and the same coaches but the level of play from one night to the next last weekend made it seem as if Gothenburg coach Roger Koehler had manufactured something new.

“I didn’t think our mental focus was good going into the Valentine game,” Koehler said of Friday night’s 56-38 loss on the road to the Badgers. “There was one big number that tells the story.”

Gothenburg committed 29 turnovers against Valentine, two-thirds of which came in the second half, Koehler said.

“We did pretty well in the first half. It was nothing special but we did OK,” he said. “Then we came out in the third quarter and started throwing the ball away. It was a horrible second half.”

After trailing the Badgers 23-20 at halftime, the Swedes allowed Valentine to capitalize on their mistakes and cruise to a 43-27 advantage at the end of three quarters.

Despite a little better fourth period, the Swedes couldn’t make up the difference.

Korey Ahlenstorf led Gothenburg with 19 points and Logan Koehler pulled down 11 rebounds.

“It was just a real discouraging game because I thought we were very comparable,” Koehler said.

When the Swedes came out with a solid first quarter against Minden on Saturday, Koehler was pleased with the turn-around.

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"If we had played all our other games the way we played against Minden, we'd have a whole lot more wins," the coach said.

Minden, at 16-2 and rated No. 3 in Class C-1, has several good shooters and experienced players, Koehler said.

"There's no shame in losing to them 68-42," he said.

Minden pressed the Swedes full court in the first quarter and the score was tied at 16-16 before the Whippets pulled back the press.

"We were getting too many lay-ups on them," Koehler said.

The Whippets opened up the scoring gap late in the first quarter and into the second with shots from behind the arc.

The Whippets had 11 three-pointers in the game shooting 44% from long range. They also made 13-of-16 from the line.

"We played hard as a team and I was pleased with the effort," the coach said.

Logan Koehler was the leading scorer with 16 points. He also had 10 rebounds and five assists.

Ahlenstorf chipped in 13 points and eight rebounds.

The Swedes (4-13) host Ains-worth (14-5) Friday night.

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“They don’t have a lot of depth but they’ve got a couple of very good players we’ll need to shut down,” he said.