

For only second time, Reeves won't have runners at state

Written by Deb Egenberger
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OGALLALA—Gothenburg runners realized they would have to run the best races of their high school careers at the C-4 district meet on Thursday to have any chance at qualifying for state.

The competition this year was just that tough.

“We knew we were on the outside looking in,” said longtime coach Steve Reeves. “I challenged them to have their best performances and some of them did.”

Still, it wasn't quite enough to get any of the Swedes to state.

The Gothenburg girls finished sixth as a team without a runner in the top 15 and the boys were seventh, also with no medals.

Cozad took the girls team title with Chadron and Holdrege also qualifying teams for this week's Class C state meet at Kearney.

Gabriella Gracia, a junior from Holdrege, was the individual winner in a time of 14:42.

Swede freshman Destiny McVay almost squeaked in for a medal but got passed about 10 meters from the finish line by Janice Garcia of Cozad. Their times were only one second apart.

“Destiny is just a freshman and she has improved immensely this year,” Reeves said. “I think

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she's got a bright future ahead."

For the Swede boys, senior Aaron Collins also barely missed out on a medal, crossing the finish in 17th place.



He ran the best time of his career in 17:56.

Ogallala took the boys team title only one point ahead of runner-up Cozad. Mitchell was third.

Ogallala senior Dereck Rosas was the individual winner for the boys in a time of 16:24.

"I think our district will do very well at state," Reeves said. "I expect to see several kids we competed against bring home state medals."

For Reeves, it's an unusual ending to the cross country season. He said there has only been one other time in his 33 years as head coach that he has not had at least one qualifier for the state meet.

"I knew it was going to be an uphill battle this year," Reeves said. "The great thing is we have a lot of kids coming back and some talent coming up. We're going to be pushing extra hard next year."