

Gothenburg powers past Ord

Written by Deb Egenberger
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Playoff possibilities still alive

With Ord focused on stopping Gothenburg's inside running game, the Swedes turned to the perimeter and made the Chanticleers pay.

"The throwback pass is kind of the old stand-by," said Swede coach Craig Haake. "It's not terribly technical and it's a play we've used since I came here."

The Swedes made the throwback pass work time and time again as Gothenburg downed Ord 30-14 at home Friday night.

"For the first time this year we got out-yarded," Haake said. "But the thing is, we made plays when we needed to, we got stops when we needed to and we scored when we had opportunities."

Ord moved the ball consistently on the Swedes, gaining 228 yards on the ground and 125 through the air for 353 total yards, 116 more than Gothenburg.



"They didn't pop the big plays," Haake said, "but that's probably the best offensive line and defensive line we've seen."

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Five Ord turnovers—three fumbles and two interceptions—led directly to three Swede touchdowns.

“It was a fantastic effort all the way around,” Haake said.

Each team went three-and-out on their opening drives and on Ord’s second possession, the Swedes forced a fumble and Logan Sheets recovered.

Seven plays later, Gothenburg ended the first quarter with a 7-0 lead on a 15-yard pass from Blake Ristine to Logan Koehler with a PAT kick by Trenton Long.

Ord fumbled again to open the second quarter, this time recovered by Zach Wolf at the Chanticleer 41 yard line.

The Swedes struggled to move the ball and settled for a 51-yard field goal attempt on fourth-and-5.

Long may have had enough leg had the wind not worked against him. The ball fell short and the Chants took over on their own 20 yard line.

Gothenburg held them off and worked to get more points on the board before halftime.

With 4:50 to play in the second period, Long hit a 44-yard field goal to put Gothenburg up 10-0.

The Swedes stopped another Ord drive before the half when Wolf intercepted a pass from Chant quarterback Trevor Fahrenholz intended for Kamron Dawe near the Ord 30 yard line.

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Gothenburg stormed out of the locker room for the third quarter as Wolf returned the kickoff 86 yards to set up another Swede score.

With 11:07 on the clock, Preston Franzen ran in from the 2 yard line. Long's PAT attempt was blocked, giving the Swedes a 16-0 advantage.

Ord got on the board after a 70-yard drive resulted in a 1-yard touchdown run by Fahrenholz and a two-point conversion run by Dawe with just over six minutes left in the third.

After forcing Gothenburg to punt, the Chanticleers marched the length of the field again, attempting a field goal from the 11 yard line that sailed wide.

They got another shot to score one play later when Ord recovered a Swede fumble at the 20 yard line.

A penalty scooted the Chants back but Nick Valla was able to get in the endzone on a 21-yard run. The two-point conversion failed leaving Gothenburg with a 16-14 lead.

"I thought oh baby, we're back in a dog fight," Haake said. "But the kids buckled down and did what they needed to do."

With nine minutes left to play, Gothenburg scored twice more to spread the gap.

After Koehler recovered another fumble, Gothenburg put together a 68-yard drive and scored on an 11-yard run by Ristine with almost three minutes left.

Long's PAT put the score at 23-14.

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Long came back on defense and intercepted another Fahrenholz pass at the 30 yard line, nearly returning it for the score.

He was knocked out of bounds at the 5 yard line so Wolf carried it in on the next play. With Long's PAT, the Swedes took a 30-14 lead leaving Ord only two minutes on the clock.

Franzen finished with 73 yards rushing on 11 carries while Wolf had 68 yards on 10 carries.

Ristine completed 4-of-9 passing for 74 yards.

"The kids played with passion and emotion," Haake said. "No one has scored more than 20 points on Ord except Kearney Catholic."

As for the Stars, they will come to town for the final regular-season game on Thursday.

Haake said sixth-ranked and unbeaten Kearney Catholic will bring some odd formations to the field but nothing too outlandish.

"We've pretty much seen the whole gamut the past three weeks," the coach said. "Kearney Catholic will bring a little more speed but as far as formation recognition, we've seen it."

At the same time, Haake said the Stars are likely to see the Swedes' entire playbook.

"You might not believe it but it's a little bigger than you might think," the coach said. "I've got a few things up my sleeve."

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Haake said it will be important for Gothenburg to control the ball and put points on the board.

“We got to the edge pretty well against Ord,” he said. “We may not get to the corner quite as easily but I think we’ll be able to hammer it between the tackles.”

With the win over Ord, Haake said he thinks the Swedes have solidified a spot in the Class C-1 state playoffs, so Gothenburg has nothing to lose against Kearney Catholic.

“We just need to go out there and play,” he said. “When we do, we’re pretty tough.”