‘Good’ loss, two wins place Swedes fifth

The Gothenburg boy’s basketball team has a positive outlook for the second half of the season after a 2-1 record and fifth place finish at Sidney’s Cabela’s Holiday Basketball Shootout last weekend.

Gothenburg lost its first game against Class B Gering last Thursday but bounced back to earn wins over Cheyenne (WY) South on Friday and Hershey on Saturday.

The Swedes are 4-5 on the season.

Gering over Gothenburg

Facing a Class B state contending Gering team, the Swedes battled for four quarters but lost to the Bulldogs in the opening round of the shootout, 64-49.

Gothenburg jumped out to a 10-5 lead hitting its first five shots of the game but a complete lull allowed Gering to go on an 8-0 run to end the first quarter and lead 17-12.

“We had one of our classic lulls,” head coach Roger Koehler said. “That got us behind and we had to stay with them the rest of the game.”

The Bulldogs continued their offensive edge outscoring the Swedes 13-12 in the second quarter

to lead 30-24 at halftime.

“After that first quarter, there weren’t any big runs for either team,” Koehler said.

He added that Gothenburg did a nice job defensively for the remainder of the game and kept the game close.

The Swedes limited their turnovers and got some good looks but couldn’t close the eight-point gap going into the final period.

Leading 45-37, Gering fought off defensive pressure most of the fourth quarter and knocked down free throws to secure a victory.

Despite the loss, Koehler said he thinks this might have been the best game the Swedes had played.

“The game was closer than the 15-point difference,” Koehler said. “We played well but not well enough.”

Gothenburg’s Tanner Borchardt had a big night scoring 30 points and pulling down nine rebounds.

No other Swedes scored more than five points.

“In that game we needed more guys to step up and score,” Koehler said. “Right now we don’t have a consistent second or third scorer.”

Gering was led by three players with 14 points apiece.

Swedes take down Bison

In its second game of the tournament, Gothenburg continued to play well and managed a 13-point win over a quick Cheyenne South team.

The Swedes got caught in South’s transition game trap turning the ball over three times in the first quarter but settled down for the remainder of the game.

After trailing 10-6 at the end of the first quarter head coach Roger Koehler said the boys were more aggressive in driving to the basket and recognizing defensive overplays.

Blake Ristine used that aggressive driving to get to the rim and earn free throws.

Ristine went a perfect 8-8 from the charity stripe in the second quarter helping the Swedes take a 25-20 halftime lead.

Koehler added that defensively the team closed out on shooters well and mixed up defenses to slow down the Bison’s transition.

The momentum continued for Gothenburg in the third quarter as they limited South to six points in the frame and scored 16 of its own.

“We continued to be aggressive and our lead ballooned in the third,” Koehler said.

With a 15-point lead going into the fourth quarter the Swedes played well to finish South off but made some mistakes also.

“We played well against a good team but we need to learn (from) situations when we’re ahead,” Koehler said.

Tanner Borchardt led Gothenburg in scoring with 16 points while Ristine added 12 points including 10-10 from the free throw line.

South’s leading scorer Kyhler Cummings had 13 points.

Gothenburg wins rematch

In a rematch of a game played Dec. 6, Gothenburg earned the same result beating the Panthers 48-37 in its third game of the tournament.

Both teams shot the ball well in the first quarter scoring a combined 33 points while the Swedes held the 18-15 advantage.

“Both teams were getting up and down the floor and knocking down open looks,” head coach Roger Koehler said. “It was a great start defensively.”

As hot as each team started, the second quarter was sluggish with tired legs kicking in and adrenaline running out.

Koehler said most shots missed were short which contributed to the Swedes scoring only six points.

However, Gothenburg limited the Panthers to two second-quarter points and led at the break 24-17.

“We were balanced on offense in the first half,” Koehler said. “It was something we needed as a team.”

The Swedes made defensive adjustments at halftime that played into their favor for the most part.

The boys switched from zone to man defense most of the half and it worked, Koehler said.

Gothenburg was ahead 36-27 going into the fourth quarter and held the ball looking for open layups a majority of the final period.

“We had a nice 15-point lead with 3 minutes left and tried running the clock down,” Koehler said. “At that point the clock was a big friend.”

Gothenburg managed its second consecutive win and gained something possibly more important while at the three-day tournament.

“Being in Sidney was a great team builder for us and I see a lot of value in that,” Koehler said.

On the court, he said he felt like the team took a step in the right direction.

“They took a step forward and left with a good mindset for the second half of our season.”

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