

## Gridiron gang gets new competition

Written by Austin Benson

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2014-15 football schedule release.

The Gothenburg football team faces new foes and travels down unfamiliar roads the next two seasons.

Every two years the Nebraska Schools Athletic Association changes sports schedules and possibly mixes up district competition, as is the case for the Swedes, who finished the 2013 season 9-3.

The Swedes host Holdrege, who was reclassified into Class C-1, the first game of the season and adds Grand Island Central Catholic, Valentine and O'Neill to their regular season schedule.

Gothenburg High School athletic director Seth Ryker said he thinks it will be a difficult schedule competitively.

"I think our kids will look forward to the challenge of playing new teams," he said. "We will have a great group of 50-55 kids that won't shy away from anyone."

Head coach Craig Haake said he likes the opportunity to play new teams including renewing a rivalry with the Dusters.

The Swedes travel to GICC for their third game of the season and Haake said, with the big city, stadium and a pair of Division I prospects matching up, it will be a game within a game.

He added he didn't know much about Valentine and O'Neill but he and his staff have already begun trying to find information on those teams.

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Another element of the new schedule is traveling a significant amount of miles next season.

Gothenburg will travel nearly 650 miles more to road games.

Ryker said the school will have to hire more drivers for some road trips.

“If the trip is over 120 miles it’s a safety concern and we will take two buses,” Ryker said. “If its under 120 miles one bus and a van will make the trip.”

In coach Haake’s mind, road games are simply another game.

He said in recent years the Swedes have played better on the road.

“We will treat away games like a business trip,” Haake said. “We’ll go play and take care of the other team.”

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