

Gothenburg didn't play up to early expectations

Written by Austin Benson
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Koehler: Despite their record the Swedes played hard in each game.

The Gothenburg's boys basketball record wasn't what head coach Roger Koehler had hoped for this season.

The Swedes finished with a 12-12 record that included three losses to the rival Haymakers.

"I'm a little disappointed with our win-loss record," he said. "I had high expectations for us."

Gothenburg struggled shooting free throws with a 58% average this season. The boys also lost seven games by 10 or fewer points.

"Our biggest downfall this season was the inability to finish games," Koehler said. "Most of our losses came down to free throw shooting."

However, no matter if the Swedes were winning or losing, Gothenburg's effort remained at full strength.

"I'm extremely happy about the effort the kids played with in all the games this season," Koehler said. "The players gave everything they had."

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Koehler added that every one of his players improved through the season. He said he had individuals accept roles and increase their level of play.

The seniors were no exception.

“The effort they showed during games will be missed,” he said.

Tanner Borchardt, a 6-9 junior, was the workhorse for the Swedes.

He averaged a double double, scoring 17 points per game and snagging 12.5 rebounds, while being double- and triple-teamed at times.

“Tanner has favorable height and strength along with his God-given talents,” Koehler said. “On top of those qualities he gives effort and has a knowledge of the game.”

Borchardt took over the top spot on the top 10 season scoring list collecting 415 points and moving him into seventh all time with 772 points scored.

He also grabbed a school record 301 rebounds

About halfway through the season freshmen Dawson Graham and Collin Hahn were contributing significant minutes to the varsity game.

Graham was starting and Hahn came off the bench for an offensive spark while fellow freshman Ty Clement also gave the Swedes an additional inside presence at times.

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"Those kids stepped up and played big minutes which is a rarity at this school," Koehler said. "They have put a lot of time in and their skill level shows that."

Even though the team finished with a .500 record, Koehler said the effort never faded which was the most positive thing about the season.

Gothenburg experienced its most success in the last week of January. The Swedes won four games in a row: two victories over Broken Bow, a win against the Minden Whippets and a road-win over Class B Hastings.



Looking ahead, Koehler said he has positive thoughts about what could happen next season.

The middle of Gothenburg's offense and defense is set with a sure all-stater returning in Borchardt.

Graham, who averaged seven points a game and Hahn played solid minutes in their first high school season and could be a formidable backcourt duo in years to come.

Those three paired with Clement and injured junior Jacob Clark, who has athletic ability, and junior Connor Schwanz, a projected starter this season if it wasn't for shoulder surgery, give the Swedes some depth to take on Southwest Conference opponents.

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But Koehler was quick to say the Swedes have some improvements to make, specifically on the offensive side of the court.

“We've got to become better shooters and that happens in the offseason,” he said.

All in all Koehler had some players adjust to new varsity roles and young players contribute to a longer season. Complicating things were the injuries players suffered in the fall.

The kids went out and gave effort all the time, Koehler said, and as a coach you can't be unhappy about that.

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