



By EARL WATT

• Leader & Times

Kaheem Ransom found a spot on the floor that he liked Tuesday, and it was not good for the Independence Pirates.

Ransom rained in six three-point shots and scored 23 points to lead Seward to an 84-66 win over the Pirates and advanced to the Region 6 Final Four.

Seward need about three minutes to iron out their shot to start the game, and the Pirates jumped out to a 6-0 lead.

A minute-and-a-half later, Ransom hit his first three to give the Saints a 7-6 lead that was part of a 23-3 run that pushed Seward to a 23-9 lead.

Ransom scored three of his six threes during the run, and Jabari Peters added another.

Seward continued to pour in points until Seward had a 21-point lead.

Independence was able to slow down the Saints in the final two minutes of the half and cut the lead to 15, but Seward grew the lead back to 19 in the first three minutes of the second half.

With 13:10 to play, Ransom drained another three-pointer to give the Saints a 59-39 lead.

Indy had one more push, and with 8:50 to play the Pirates had the lead down to 13, but Seward responded with a 12-2 run that pushed the lead back to 23 after Ransom's final three-pointer in the game with five minutes to play.

Seward led by as many as 24 with 1:27 to play, but Independence ended the game with two three-pointers in the final minute to cue the final margin to 18, 84-66.

Ransom led all scorers with 23 points. Leslee Smith added a double-double with 12 points and 11 rebounds, Jabari Peters scored 12, and Edson Avila added 10.

"We played pretty well on offense except we had some unforced turnovers we need to clean up," Seward coach Bryan Zollinger said. "We got lax when we had leads and gave up a few lay-ups."

Seward's movement on offense was smooth, and after Saturday's second half lapse, the Saints continued to play with precision in the second half against the Pirates.

"Overall we did pretty good offensively," Zollinger said. "We only got in trouble when we were trying to force it to one guy. When we had patience we were pretty good."

Seward held Indy to 35 percent shooting and 13 points below their season average.

Seward sinks Pirates, 84-66

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The win sets up a semi-final game against Barton. Seward split with the Grizzlies during the regular season, losing 79-66 in the Jayhawk West opener at home but defeating the Grizzlies at Barton, 79-66.

The winner will advance to the Region 6 championship Saturday at the Hartman Arena in Wichita.