

By ROY ALLEN

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The Seward County Saints continued their dominance on opening day of Jayhawk West Conference series on Friday as they went to conference leading Garden City and swept a double header from the Broncbusters on their home turf at Williams Stadium to take over 1st place in the league standings.

The Saints never trailed in the opener, taking a 3-1 lead into the seventh before hanging on to win 3-2.



In the second game the Saints jumped in front right away and went on to blow the Busters away 13-5 to sweep the twinbill.

Early on Game 1 was a pitcher's dual between the Saints Tyler Wiedenfeld and the Busters Bradley Spires. Both pitchers yielded just a single through two innings as the game was scoreless 0-0.

The Saints got the scoring started in the third as Johnny Griffith singled with one out and scored later on on an RBI single from Bryson Allen to put Seward in front 1-0.

Garden City threatened to tie the game in the 4th as they put two runners on on back to back singles with one out against Wiedenfeld, but the sophomore ace worked out of the jam to keep the Saints on top 1-0. Seward added to their lead in the sixth when Allen reached on a Garden

City error with one out and the Saints again came up big with two down as Marshall singled through the hole on the left side to score him and make it 2-0.

The Busters finally broke through with their first run in the bottom of the 6th to make it 2-1 but the Saints got the run back in their next trip to the plate as Griffith ripped a single up the middle to score Reed Thompson with one out to make it 3-1 Seward.

The Busters made some noise in their final at bats, scoring a run and loading the bases with one out, but Griffith, the Saints closer vacated his position at third base to take over on the mound to shut down the Garden rally and nail down his fourth save of the season to give Seward the 3-2 win.

Wiedenfeld scattered seven hits in 6 2/3 innings to pick up the win. The right hander allowed two runs and struck out three.

Seward finished with eight hits, all singles, in the victory.

Griffith and Jake Fuller both finished with two hits for Seward while Griffith, Allen, and Marshall had the three Saints RBI's.

Seward wasted no time in jumping on the Busters in Game 2 of the double header, scoring three times in the first inning on five singles, including RBI knocks from Troy Owen, Marshall, and Alex Scanlan to grab an early 3-0 lead.

Garden City scored their first run of the contest in the bottom of the second when a Seward error and back to back hit batters set the table for the Busters and a one out sacrifice fly brought a run in to make it 3-1.

The Saints flirted with danger again in the third as another error fueled a Garden threat, loading bases before a fly out averted the scoring chance to keep Seward on top 3-1.

Seward added to their advantage in the fifth, getting three straight singles from Deven Nelson, Owen, and Marshall to score a run to make it 4-1 and later in the inning an RBI groundout off the bat of Scanlan gave Seward it's fifth run of the game to make the score 5-1.

Saints starting pitcher Austin King twirled a 1-2-3 bottom of the fifth to allow Seward to do further damage in the top of the sixth as Allen tripled with one out to plate a run and Nelson hit a sac fly behind him to put the guys in green on top 7-1.

Seward blew the game wide open in the eighth as Griffith, Fuller, and Allen wrapped consecutive singles to start the inning to score a run and make it 8-1, and after an Owen single re-loaded the bases, a triple off the bat of Marshall cleared the pillows and put the Saints up 11-1.

Scanlan doubled later in the inning to put Seward up 12-1 and the rout was on. Seward was unable to force the run rule as a Garden City home run and a one out double scored three to make it 12-5, but that was all that the Busters got off of Saints pitching as Seward went on to win 12-5 to sweep the double header.

Seward smashed out 22 hits in the win, their most hits since a 22 hit effort against Coffeyville in the 2011 Region VI Tournament.

Seven different Seward hitters had multiple hit contests for the Saints.

Fuller and Allen combined at the top of the lineup to go 8 for 11 with 7 runs scored while the Saints 3-4-5 hitters in Nelson, Owen, and Marshall each had three hits, and Marshall drove in a career high five runs.

King earned the win on the bump going 7 1/3 innings and allowing seven hits and four earned runs while striking out seven.

Hayden Howard came out of the Saints bullpen to finish the game out and retired all five hitters he faced.

The Saints creep closer to the .500 mark as they now sit 15-18 overall, and make a jump from third to first in the Jayhawk West standings with the sweep where they now stand 9-5.

The final two games of the series were postponed on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, the Saints and the Busters will finally try and finish the four game set at 1 p.m. today in Garden City.