

Indy struggles at free throw line, Saints win in OT

By EARL WATT--• Daily Leader

The atmosphere in the Greenhouse on the campus of Seward County seemed more suited for a Region 6 playoff game rather than an early- season match-up.

But the electricity may have been enough to spark the Saints to a

93-87 overtime win in Seward's first true test of the season.

Seward trailed most of the second half and was able to force a tie with 1.7 seconds to play.



Independence had chances down the stretch to put the game out of reach, but the Pirates went three for six from the line in the final minute of regulation. The noise in the Greenhouse may have had something to do with Indy's struggles at the line as well as an involved student section right behind the Pirate bench gave a constant barrage of heckles to the free throw shooters.

"It was a really big crowd for early season game," Seward coach Bryan Zollinger said. "They were very vocal. It makes it a difficult place for others to play."

Seward was down by seven with less than three minutes to play when Drew Jones connected and was fouled. He hit the free throw, and a few seconds later put in another basket to cut the deficit to two.

But Weston Wiebe responded with a basket and a foul to put the Pirates ahead 81-76 with 2:07 to play.

Latiq Agard scored for Seward, and from there it became a battle of free throws.

Seward hit six of seven attempts in the final two minutes while Independence went three of six.

Seward's Antonio Smith could have won the game for Seward with 1.7 seconds to go when he was fouled shooting a three-pointer and the Saints trailing by two, but he missed the first shot before making the next two to force overtime.

The Pirates continued to struggle at the line in the extra period as the heat in the Greenhouse hit blistering levels. Indy only connected on one of four attempts and was shut out in the final 2:22. Seward scored the last seven points of overtime for the 93-87 win.

"It's bittersweet," Zollinger said. "We made a ton of mistakes. A lot of times we looked like a freshmen team that hasn't played tough games, that the pressure would get to us. But then we would make a big time play. Hopefully we learn from this without having to lose."



Smith led the Saints with 21 points, Thijin Moses added 20, Agard scored 19, Marquez Patterson scored 15, and Drew Jones also scored 15. Jon Tassin had three.

## **Saints fans make sure Independence experiences GREENHOUSE EFFECT**

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Seward will face Independence again Saturday at Independence. The Saints play Friday at Independence against Labette.