

By EARL WATT

• Daily Leader

On a night when upsets were occurring throughout the Jayhawk West, the Saints also found themselves trailing a team that had nothing to lose.

Colby came to the Green House 0-10 in conference play and was 10 seconds away from a victory when Marky Nolen forced a turnover, sprinted to the goal, made a pass to a wide open Robert Sigala who made the go ahead basket while being fouled. Seward avoided the upset in a 67-64 win and moved one game closer to first place when Hutchinson suffered an upset in the Arena by losing to Garden City.

“We knew Colby would put up a fight,” Seward coach Brian Zollinger said. “They are at a point in the season where they have nothing to lose. They are playing loose. they do what they do, they have no pressure, so they are playing well.”

Colby played so well in fact that despite trailing by six in the first half they were able to rally to a seven point lead.

Regis Schafer keyed the Colby comeback by connecting on two three-pointers in the last minute of the first half, and the Trojan push continued in the second half. Colby took a lead in the first tow minutes of the second half, and the Saints continued to chase Colby the rest of the half.

Trailing by six with three minutes to play, Marcus James fouled out.

Late surge lifts Saints

Monday, 08 February 2010 11:48

But Latiq Agard picked up the offensive load and scored the next three points for the Saints while the defense continued to pressure the Trojans.



Colby's Jose Pena-Benjamin hit a free throw to give the Trojans a 63-60 lead with 1:27 to play, and Nolen cut the lead to one with 1:01 to play with a basket.

Another Seward foul gave COLby a chance to rebuild the lead, but Aireus Stephenson was only able to make one of two shots.

After a missed Seward shot and trailing by two, the Saints forced a Colby turnover, and Latiq Agard was able to tie the game with 26.2 seconds to go.

Colby brought the ball up court and was looking to hold for a final shot, but Stephenson was trapped by Nolen and Sigala against the sideline and half court, and Nolen was able to poke the ball free and set up Sigala's game-winning shot.

Colby attempted a desperation three-pointer as time expired, but the shot sailed wide.

"I feel really good about having the character to battle back and find a way to win the game," Zollinger said. "I felt like we had to keep playing aggressive. The defense came up with several big plays down the stretch, and that got us two transition lay-ups."

But Zollinger didn't think the game should have been so close at the end.

Late surge lifts Saints

Monday, 08 February 2010 11:48

“I am concerned we didn’t play with more energy and poise prior to that,” he said. “Against Barton County we were energetic, we shared the ball. Tonight we couldn’t make perimeter threes, we were hitting everything short, and that made us more hesitant to shoot.”

Agard led the Saints with 24 points, Nolen had 12, and Sigala scored nine.