

By Rustin Watt

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Down seven with eight minutes to play, Seward chipped away and made tough baskets in traffic to defeat Dodge City 67-63 at the Green House Saturday night.

It was homecoming with a huge crowd afoot, and a close win over a conference rival was the icing on the cake for the Saints.



This game had the makings of a battle right out of the gate. The Conquistadors shot out to a 7-0 lead before back-to-back threes from Spencer Moore and another by Donte McCarter erased the Conqs lead in a little over a minute.

Back and forth it went the rest of the first half with two Saints scoring in double figures before going into the locker room.

By the time the half time buzzer sounded, Spencer Moore had dropped 10 points and Robert Sigala 11, but the Saints still trailed 37-34.

Early in the second half the Saints had many opportunities at lay-ups off steals and went up and drew what appeared to be contact on four or five occasions, but no whistle sounded.

Despite not being able to cash in on those opportunities, more were to come.

“Things just weren’t going our way early on,” Saints head coach Bryan Zollinger said. “We got frustrated — players and coaches, too. But we adjusted to things and just continued to play hard.”

With eight minutes to play the Saints were down seven before Marcus James received a pass at the top of the key and split the Conqs defense for a lay-up. On the ensuing possession, Latiq Agard was able to convert on a circus shot surrounded by four Conquistador defenders. Marky Nolen capped off the run by sinking two free throws, and the Saints were back in business down one, 53-52.

Dodge stretched the lead back to four with a little over five minutes to play before Agard made a basket despite falling to the floor and completed the and one with a free throw to once again make it a one-point game 58-57.

James then received a pass in the corner; drove baseline and got a basket and the foul to give Seward a 60-58 lead.

Free throws were traded and again the game was tied with just under three minutes to play.

A Donte McCarter steal that he took the distance for two gave the Saints the lead. A steal by Marcus James and a pass ahead to McCarter who spun through lane and sunk a floater gave Seward a 65-61 lead with a minute and a half to play.

The Conqs answered and made it a two-point game with a minute to play. Seward was unable to get the ball inside and Sigala on their next possession and had to force a shot to beat the shot clock. The shot rimmed out and despite being outrebounded 40-25 on the night, James crashed the boards and came down with the ball when it was crucial. James kicked it out, and with little time on the clock Dodge was forced to foul and sent Sigala to the line with 22.8

Saints rally late for homecoming win

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seconds to play.

Sigala sunk both free throws to give the Saints a 67-63 lead. Dodge was unable to convert on their next possession and once again fouled Sigala with 9.6 seconds to play. Sigala missed both opportunities as Dodge's Mykael Thompson came away with the rebound and sprinted up the floor. Thompson lost control as a Saint scooped it up and tossed it ahead to a lonely Jon Tassin on the other side of the court. Tassin power dribbled took two steps and tomahawked it home before striking a pose. The dunk left Dodge with .8 on the clock and no hope as Seward took the contest 69-63.

Four Saints scored in double digits. Sigala led the way with 17. Agard scored 13, Moore had 12 and James scored 10.

The Saints had less than 10 turnovers. Seward only turned the ball over seven times on the night and forced 22.

The win came at a crucial time with a tight race in the Jayhawk West. The Saints now sit one game behind No. 12 Hutch and two behind No. 16 Butler who they will play Saturday at the Green House to finish the regular season after traveling to Garden on Wednesday.