

By ROY ALLEN

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The Seward County Saints picked up their fourth straight series win over rival Garden City Monday afternoon at Brent Gould Field in Liberal. In the first game of the day the Saints were stunned late as Garden City scored four in extra innings to take the game 9-5 in eight innings. In the series finale the Saints turned the tables on the Busters, getting a seventh inning home run from Jake Fuller and a walk off single from Jordan Leinweber to steal the game 6-5 and win the series 3-1.

After a pair of dominating pitching performances on Day 1 of the series to take a 2-0 lead against rival Garden City, Seward starter Pete Macke kept the Busters scoreless through the first three innings of Game 3 to give his Saints a chance to strike first.

The Saints cashed in runs in the third. After Jake Fuller walked and Reed Thompson doubled with one out, Brent Williams scored Fuller from third on a sacrifice fly and Thompson came around to give Seward a 2-0 lead after a two-out single from Kevin Connolly.

Seward's lead didn't last long though as Garden City struck back for two runs of their own in the top half of the fourth inning.

Garden City staged a two out rally in the fifth started by a walk to score three times to take their first lead, 5-2.

A solo home run from Williams drew the Saints to within a pair in the bottom half of the fifth, and the Saints tied the game up in the sixth on RBI singles from Mason Marshall and Alex White to make it 5-5.

In the top half of the eighth Garden City runners were all over the bases as the Busters used four hits and a pair of Seward County errors to score four times to take a 9-5 lead.

Three Seward County errors proved costly in the loss, allowing three Garden City unearned runs in the 9-5 final. The Saints finished with nine hits, getting 2-for-3 afternoons from both Connolly and Leinweber and a two-RBI game from Williams. Bezio suffered the loss on the mound for Seward, allowing four runs, one earned, in 2 1/3 innings of relief.

In the series finale the Saints allowed Garden City to score two second-inning runs without the benefit of a hit as starter Keenan Hall walked three Buster hitters and a throwing error from Marshall behind the plate gifted Garden City a 2-0 lead.



The Seward offense picked their defense up in the bottom half of the inning as Leinweber singled and Connolly doubled to start the frame and both later came around to score on RBI's from Marshall and Brandon Rix to tie the game at 2.

Garden City solo home runs in the third and fourth innings put the Busters back on top 4-2 and a quick eight pitch inning for Seward on offense in the bottom of the fourth meant that the score remained that way into the fifth.

Hall worked around traffic in the top half of the fifth to keep it a 4-2 game and his offense rewarded him with a pair of runs in the bottom half of the inning on two-out RBI's from Williams and Leinweber to tie the game back up at 4.

A leadoff walk spelled doom for the Saints in the seventh as Garden City manufactured a run to go on top 5-4 and it looked like the Busters were on their way to a series split with just three outs remaining for the Saints.

With one out in the bottom half of the Saints seventh, the most unlikely of power surges came off the bat of leadoff man Jake Fuller who drove a 1-2 pitch over the wall for just his second career home run to tie the game at 5. With two outs, Williams kept Seward's chances alive and on the second pitch, Leinweber laced a single to the outfield scoring Williams to give the Saints a 6-5 walk off win to take the series.

Seward outhit Garden 8-6 in the win, but committed five errors while the Busters played a clean final game of the series. Leinweber was the offensive star for Seward, going 3-for-4 with two RBIs in the victory. No other Saint had more than one hit in the contest. Grant Glaze earned his second win of the year, tossing a scoreless inning in relief for Seward.

The Saints won the series with Garden City for the fourth straight season. Seward moved to 17-11 overall on the year with the split while their Jayhawk West Conference record went to 8-4 where they sit in a three-way tie with Hutchinson and Butler who are both 6-2. Garden City ends the series at 13-12 overall and 6-6 in Jayhawk West where they are in a log jam in the middle of the conference standings.