

By ROY ALLEN

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After losing at home against rival Hutchinson on Wednesday, the Seward County Lady Saints responded Saturday with a straights-set win over Garden City Saturday.

The win locked up home court advantage for the first round of the Region VI Tournament for Seward.

The Lady Saints had to play from behind in the first set, but came back to win convincingly 25-16. Seward quickly found themselves in a 7-3 hole against Garden City. The Lady Saints woke up and went on an 8-3 run to tie things up. Seward continued to push points, scoring four straight to take their first multi-point lead of the match at 15-11. Seward outscored Garden City 15-5 over the final 20 points of the set to win by nine.

Seward finished off 14 kills in the set, and had just one error. Their .481 hitting percentage in the set was their best in conference play this season.

The second set was a competitive one throughout. Seward took a slight early advantage 5-3 after a pair of kills from Kristen Anderson and remained up by two later on at 10-8. The Lady Saints took their largest lead of the set at 13-8 after back to back Garden City attack errors. The Busters regrouped and cut the Lady Saints lead to just one moments later at 14-13. Seward kept the Busters at bay, but couldn't pull away, holding a three-point lead, 22-19 late in the set. Reigning Jayhawk West player of the week Carolina Gasparini finished the set off, 25-21, to give the Lady Saints a 2-0 edge

Lady Saints beat Garden in three sets

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Looking to close out the match, Seward got off to a quick start in the third. The Busters wouldn't let the Lady Saints out of the Perryman Center without a fight though. Garden erased an early Seward lead, and tied the set at 7-7.

The Lady Saints responded with a 4-1 run, including three more Gasparini kills to take the lead back 11-8. Garden City caught a bit of momentum midway through the set, and took their first lead since the first set at 13-12 after back to back Seward attack errors.

The Lady Saints scored the next three points to take a 15-13 lead, and kept on rolling, going up by four at 19-15 after an ace from libero Kari Anderson. The run took the wind out of the Busters sails, and Garden City did not get close again. The Seward cruised to the finish line, getting a kill from Annelise Sanchez to put an exclamation point on a 25-20 win, to take the match 3-0.

Gasparini had another huge match for the Lady Saints, recording her seventh straight double-double with a match high 15 kills and 14 digs.

The Lady Saints improve to 18-12 on the year, and 8-3 in Jayhawk West action. Garden City falls to 5-16, and 3-8 in conference play.

The win assures the Lady Saints of a Region VI Tournament home match yet again on Nov. 5. Their opponent for that tournament match, has yet to be determined.

Next up for Seward is a key conference tilt against West leading Colby at 6:30 p.m. tonight. The Lady Saints will then have a week off before returning to the court on Oct. 22, in the Greenhouse for Dig Pink Night, against Dodge City.