

## Saints earn first win of year over Northwest Kansas Tech

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By ROY ALLEN

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Following Friday night's loss to the Southern Colorado Kings, the Saints rebounded on Saturday to pick up a 72-69 victory over the Northwest Kansas Tech Mavericks.

The Mavericks came out firing to grab an early lead, but Seward bounced back to take their first lead of the night with 12:35 remaining in the first half at 11-10.

The contest continued to be a back-and-forth one as Northwest Tech took the lead back before the Saints erased that, and took control again 26-22. A 6-0 Tech run gave them a 28-26 lead at the 4 minute mark, but the Saints fought right back, and took a 35-34 lead into the half.

Midway through the second it remained a nip-and-tuck battle with Northwest Tech leading 49-47.

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Neither team was able to grab control as a flurry of whistles sounded, putting both teams in the bonus with more than 12 minutes remaining in the game. With four minutes to go, the game was deadlocked at 62.

The Saints took a one point advantage before a pair of free throws from Kevin Smith gave them a 68-65 lead with two minutes to go. The teams paraded back and forth to the free throw line into the final minute before an offensive rebound and subsequent free throw for the Saints Quentin Purtue gave Seward a 72-69 lead with 9 seconds left.

A last ditch effort to extend the game by Maverick star Gian Clavell was off the mark, and the Saints pulled down the rebound to hang on 72-69 for their first win of the 2013-2014 season.

Seward shot just 35 percent in the win, while Northwest Tech shot 44 percent. The Saints outscored the Mavs 30-17 from the free throw line, which ultimately proved to be the difference.

Secean Johnson led the Saints with 19, while Smith added 17 and Malcolm Hill-Bey had 10.

The Saints improve to 1-1 on the year, and will have one week to prepare for the Garden City Pepsi Classic next weekend. They will take on No. 24 North Platte and Kingdom Prep on Friday and Saturday in the Perryman Center.