

By EARL WATT

• Daily Leader

With 8.9 seconds to play and down by two, Marquez Patterson dribbled toward the basket and looked for an open teammate.

He slipped near the free throw line and lost the ball. Butler recovered, and Seward suffered another last-second loss, 63-61.

But coach Bryan Zollinger did not throw his freshman under the bus for the late turnover, one of 27 in the game for the Saints as a team.

“Quez was forced into playing the point,” he said. “Robert Sigala had a family matter. It’s not easy to go and be the point guard. He made some mistakes, but being thrust into that position, he did a heck of a job.”

Seward played without the services of Sigala and Latiq Agard who continued to sit on the bench in street clothes due to an ankle injury.

Seward’s Tony Smith also saw limited playing time. Smith went 0 for 4 including three missed three-point attempts early in the game.

The kids that have the attitude and the work ethic we want will play,” Zollinger said. Those that

don't, they will not play.”

The loss was the second consecutive in the Jayhawk West, and both after Seward had first-half leads.

The Saints had a 24-7 lead over Butler with 10 minutes to play in the first half after the Saints went on a 10-0 run that included two three-pointers by Thijin Moses.

But the Grizzlies outscored Seward 25-10 the rest of the half, and Seward had a 34-32 lead at the break.

Seward had a five-point lead in the second half, 46-41, but the Grizzlies went on an 11-2 run to take a 52-46 lead with six minutes to play.

Seward tied the game with 3:38 remaining, but the Grizzlies stretched back to a six-point lead with 36 seconds to play.

Marcus James and Patterson combined for five free throws and had the game down to 61-61 with 10 seconds to go.

Butler's Maurice Colter went one for two at the free throw line with

8.9 seconds to play before Patterson's final turnover ended the game.

“It's the same thing,” Zollinger said. “We have to play tougher with the ball. Five or six times we dribble and fall down. We have to play better defense and rebound. We have not won the rebounding war in a conference game this year.”

Another early lead disappears for Saints

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James led the Saints with 16, Patterson had 13, Jn Tassin scored 11, and Drew Jones added 10.

Seward (16-6, 3-5) will host Hutchinson (16-6, 5-3) at 8 p.m. tonight.