

### Queen Monte Lights Up Dodge City

In hockey, it is considered a Bobby Orr hat trick if a player gets a goal, an assist, and gets into a fight in the same game. Tonight at the Greenhouse, Seward's Fabiana Monte might have just created her own version of a basketball hat trick, scoring a game high 20 points, holding her opponent to a season low 9 points, and after the game, being crowned the Homecoming Queen all in a night's work as Seward County downed Dodge City 87-53 to pick up their 19th win of the season.

In front of a packed Homecoming night Greenhouse crowd, the 10th ranked Seward County Lady Saints got off on the right foot Saturday night in Liberal. The Lady Saints got baskets from Shanise Brooks and Korina Chapman in the paint to get things going and scored the first 12 points of the game, holding a high flying Dodge City team without a point until the 14:36 mark of the first half. Seward pushed their lead to 17-4 and then went on top 21-7 at the midway point of the first half. Seward started to catch fire on their end of the floor and Dodge City couldn't have been colder on their end as the Lady Saints ran off 20 straight points, including a barrage of three pointers from Fabiana Monte to take a commanding 37-17 lead with under 3:00 to go in the half. Seward continued to put the pressure on the Lady Conquistadors in the final three minutes and it was all Lady Saints at the break as they went to the locker rooms on top 43-20.

Seward actually shot just 39% in the half, but thanks to 13 offensive rebounds, the Lady Saints managed 46 first half field goal attempts while Dodge City was dreadful offensively, making just 7 field goals and shooting 22% in the period. Monte led the way for Seward, pouring in 12 first half points while Alana Simon chipped in 8 and both Brooks and Kyndal Davis had 6. Samantha Herrera led Dodge with 9 first half points while their top two scorers, Kelli Tolar and Azaria Nave, averaging a combined 35 points per game coming into the contest, were held to just 2 points together and without a field goal in the first 20 minutes.

It was more Seward County as the second half got underway. The Lady Saints remained up big 51-29 five minutes into the half and saw Monte drill her sixth three of the game at the 10:59 mark to put them in front 63-31. Seward used the momentum to go on a 21-2 run to balloon the lead to 72-31 by the midway point of the half. In the middle of the run, Seward held Dodge City without a single point for nearly nine minutes before mercifully a Lady Conq basket made it 78-33 with 6:27 remaining. From there it was just a matter of what the final score would be and Dodge City closed the gap mildly in the final minutes of the game before the final buzzer sounded with the Lady Saints winning 87-53.

The Lady Saints picked up their offensive flow in the second half, shooting 46% in the period to finish the game at 42% overall. Dodge City upped their production to 32% shooting but still finished the game shooting under 27% on the night. Monte led all scorers with 20 points while also snatching 7 rebounds. Brooks finished with 14 points and 7 rebounds for Seward in 19 minutes of work and Davis pitched in 12 points and had 8 steals for the Lady Saints. Tolar and Nave finished a combined 3 for 10 shooting for Dodge City and ended the night with a combined 12 points, 23 under their season average.

Following the game, Monte had to wipe 32 minutes of hard working sweat off to get into her Homecoming dress, which she did just in the nick of time to come out and win the Homecoming queens crown to the delight of the Greenhouse crowd.

Seward improves to 19-2 overall on the year and takes sole possession of second place in the Jayhawk West standings at 4-1. Dodge City falls to 14-7 overall and drops back to 1-4 in Jayhawk West action.

The Lady Saints will return home on Wednesday when they take on Cloud County in a pivotal Jayhawk West matchup at 6:00 in the Greenhouse. Free tickets are available courtesy of our buyout sponsor First National Bank, at any of their Liberal locations.

Roy Allen

SCCC/ATS