

Seward Swings their Way to 4-0 Start

After winning a pair of nailbiters on opening day of the 2014 season, the Lady Saints took a little different approach in their split double header Saturday against Grayson County and Rose State. Seward pounded out 29 hits and 26 runs, defeating Grayson 13-10 and Rose State 13-5 to improve to 4-0 on the early season.

For the first time all season, the Lady Saints found themselves in a hole early on in their matchup with Grayson County. The Lady Vikings got on the board in the bottom of the 1st, using a one out walk and a two run home run to take an early 2-0 lead.

In the 3rd Grayson added onto their lead with another walk followed by a home run and after three innings of play it was 4-0 Lady Vikings.

Seward finally got on the board in the top of the 4th as Pokey Ewell reached on an error to start the inning before Becky Allen singled and Felisha Vogelaar walked to load the bases with nobody out. The Lady Saints were just scratching the surface of what was about to explode into a monster inning. Two passed balls gave the Lady Saints a pair of runs to make it 4-2 Grayson and after a walk, Carmen Hughes singled home Vogelaar to make it 4-3. Three pitches later a double from catcher Vanessa Oakden tied the game at 4. Seward took their first lead of the game on an RBI groundout from Andrea Sitter to make it 5-4 and with two outs in the inning the Lady Saints just kept on hitting. Ewell laced an RBI single to left to make it 6-4 Seward as the bases remained loaded. Allen came to the plate looking for her second hit of the inning and she got much more than that. Allen blasted a 3-2 pitch sailing over the fence for a grand slam and the first Seward home run of the year to blow the game open 10-4.

After getting the big inning from her offense, Seward starting pitcher Katelyn Craker settled down, getting three straight strikeouts to end the Grayson half of the 4th to keep the Lady Saints in front 10-4.

Seward tacked on another run in the 5th as Hughes and Oakden put together back to back doubles to make it 11-4, but here came the Lady Vikings back in the bottom half of the inning. The inning got off to a bad start for the Lady Saints with an error and Grayson immediately made Seward pay with a two run home run to make it 11-6. Two more Seward errors in the inning and a two out single plated two runs for the Lady Vikings and as the 5th came to a close it was a game again 11-8.

After loud 4th and 5th innings, the 6th inning was rather quiet. Seward went down in order in the top half of the frame while Grayson managed a pair of harmless singles in a scoreless bottom of the inning.

To the 7th they went with the Lady Saints in front 11-8. Hughes and Oakden again reached base with one out to start a Seward rally and after a strikeout, both of them came around to score on an RBI single from Marissa Chavez to give the Lady Saints two much needed insurance runs as the score went to 13-8.

In the bottom of the inning Grayson put together a one out single and a double to plate a run and a Seward error in the outfield allowed another run to score to make it 13-10. With the tying run now on deck, relief pitcher Brittany Hopkins came up big, getting a flyout to left field to end the threat to

finish the inning and wrap up the 13-10 win for the Lady Saints.

The Lady Saints pounded out 13 hits in the win while Grayson managed 12 on their side. Oakden had a monster game for the Lady Saints, going 4 for 4 with 2 doubles, 2 RBI's, and 2 runs scored in the victory. Allen was 2 for 4 and drove in 4 with the grand slam while both Sitter and Hughes had 2 hits and an RBI each. Craker earned the win for Seward, going 4 innings and allowing 6 runs, 5 earned while striking out 9. Hopkins earned her first career save by going the final 3 innings and allowing 4 runs, 1 earned with 4 strikeouts.

SEWARD COUNTY/GRAYSON COUNTY BOX

SCORE<http://www.sewardsaints.com/sports/sball/2013-14/boxscores/20140215_jgs3.xml>

In game two of their split double header the Lady Saints took on the host squad, the Rose State Lady Raiders. Once again the Lady Saints had to play from behind after Rose scored two runs on three hits in the bottom of the 1st to go on top 2-0.

After a 13 run outburst in the first game, the Lady Saints bats were dead early on in game two as Seward went down in order in both the 2nd and 3rd innings on just a combined 11 pitches to remain in the trail 2-0.

In the bottom of the 3rd Rose State got a leadoff home run to add to their lead and take a 3-0 advantage into the 4th.

The Lady Saints got rid of their goose egg in the 4th as Sitter singled to start the inning and Ewell doubled her in on the first pitch she saw to make it a 3-1 game. After a wild pitched moved Ewell to third, Allen launched a fly ball deep to the outfield for a sacrifice fly to allow her to trot home and make it 3-2.

Rose State answered the Lady Saints two runs with two runs of their own in the bottom half of the inning, using three singles and a Seward error to plate the pair to go back in front by three, 5-2.

The offenses continued to click on both sides as the Lady Saints came out swinging in the 5th. Hughes and Oakden both doubled to start the Seward half of the inning to score a run and make it 5-3 and back to back singles from Joe Ann Rapoza and Chavez pushed another run home to make it 5-4. Still with nobody out in the inning, an RBI single from Sitter tied the game and a 2 RBI single from Ewell made it 7-5 Lady Saints. Allen continued the hit parade with a double to score Ewell and make it 8-5 and later in the inning an RBI single from Danielle Orr cushioned Seward's advantage to 9-5. With one out in the inning an error on Rose State pitcher Tera Gammon allowed two more Seward runs to cross and at the end of the inning the Lady Saints had scored 9 times and had turned a 5-2 deficit into an 11-5 lead.

The score remained 11-5 into the 7th when Orr sent a 1-1 pitch over the fence for her first career home run to lead off the inning to make it 12-5 Lady Saints. A single from Hughes followed Orr's bomb and Oakden ripped another RBI double to drive her home to make it 13-5. Seward loaded the bases later in the inning but wouldn't score again but they wouldn't need it as Jaclyn Wagner kept the score right there in the bottom half of the frame to give the Lady Saints a 13-5 win.

The Lady Saints finished with a season high 16 hits in the win. Eight of the nine Seward starters had at least one hit while six different players had multi-hit games. Ewell finished 3 for 5 with 3 RBI's and 2 runs scored while Hughes also had 3 hits and scored 3 times. Orr and Oakden had 2 hits and 2 RBI's apiece and Chavez and Sitter both had 2 hits and an RBI for the Lady Saints. Wagner earned

the win in her collegiate debut, going all 7 innings, allowing 5 runs on 13 hits while striking out 3.

SEWARD COUNTY/ROSE STATE BOX

SCORE<http://www.sewardsaints.com/sports/sball/2013-14/boxscores/20140215_gf2f.xml>

The Lady Saints improve to 4-0 with the split sweep. Seward will have two days off before hitting the field again on Tuesday when they travel to Pratt to take on the Beavers. The Lady Saints will open their home schedule on Wednesday when they battle Frank Phillips at Lady Saints Field in Liberal.

SCCC/ATS Roy Allen