



SPORTS

LAMORINDAS LOCAL SPORTS NEWS

Saint Mary's Rugby Dominates in Win over Sacramento State

By Kevin D. Shallat



Photo Tod Fierner

The Saint Mary's rugby club is back in action this year, and they are as good as ever — once again ranked as one of the top ten teams in the nation. The Gaels hosted Sacramento State Saturday, Dec. 1, in blustery conditions, yet were unfazed as they rolled over the Hornets 53-12.

The Saint Mary's men's rugby team has everything going for them right now. After making it to the quarterfinals of the national tournament last year with reigning coach of the year in Tim O'Brien and, they are currently ranked sixth in the nation.

The Gaels played the Hornets last year in Moraga as well, and beat that Sacramento State team by a similar score of 68-13. However, when the two teams squared up against each other in March, they played under sunny, ideal conditions. This was not the case Saturday, as the two teams played in near freezing

temperatures.

Saint Mary's captain Kevin Swiryn wasn't slowed by the cold weather, as he scored the first try of the game, and went on to score four tries in the match. Swiryn scored two of the three tries for the Gaels in the first half. His second try came off an impressive 20-yard run down the far sideline. Saint Mary's only hit one of their three conversion attempts in the first half. Sacramento State was able to keep the score close, as they scored a try down their sideline just before half, cutting the Gaels lead to 17-7 at halftime.

Swiryn, one of the last players to have been recruited to play football at Saint Mary's, has proven to be a real asset to the Gaels rugby program. In this game Swiryn excited the Saint Mary's fans as he was able to cut through the Sacramento State defense with ease. "He sees a gap

and can hit it pretty quickly," O'Brien said.

When Swiryn wasn't getting his teammates involved, he was active on the defensive end.

On one play he stole the ball away from an opposing player and tipped the ball to himself. Swiryn then calmly passed the ball to a teammate, stopping any chance of Sacramento State scoring on their drive.

It may have taken the Gaels a full half to warm up in the unusually cold weather in Moraga, but it was worth the wait, as Saint Mary's scored six more tries in the second half. The Gaels played a strong defensive game, which was largely due to the exceptional play of their interior, as they held the Hornets to only 12 points. However, the day belonged to the offense for the Gaels. Saint Mary's fly half Matt Crawford was everywhere Saturday, as his strong heads up play garnered him player of the match honors.



Photo Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's Rolls Over Seton Hall with Balanced Attack

By Kevin D. Shallat

The Saint Mary's men's basketball team is on a roll in their undefeated streak, and the buzz around town is turning heads nationally. Saint Mary's was able to take their win streak to 6-0 on the season, thanks to their 85-70 win against Seton Hall on Saturday, Dec. 1.

Freshman Patrick Mills continues to take this team to new heights. The point guard is getting everybody involved, and his explosive offense is able to take pressure away from other players, which is giving them open shots. The Gaels found out Saturday night that their star point guard doesn't need to score 37 points every night to win, which was the case in this game, as four players scored in double digits for the Gaels. Mills finished the game with 19 points, six rebounds, and four assists in 39 minutes.

Saint Mary's jumped out to a 13-2 lead to start off the game. However, Seton Hall's Brian Laing did most of his damage against the Gaels in the first half, with 12 points and seven rebounds before the break. Laing went on to record a double-double, finishing with 22 points and 10 rebounds. The Gaels were able to limit Laing in the second half. The Pirates got to within three points of the



L-R: Omar Samhan (50), Patrick Mills (13), Diamon Simpson (20)

Photo Tod Fierner

Gaels, but Saint Mary's pulled away each time, ending the first half with a comfortable 44-30 lead.

The Gaels continued their dominance over a talented Seton Hall team in the second half. The Pirates got within nine points at the 15:43 mark, before a Diamon Simpson lay-up took the lead back to double digits. Seton Hall made it a ten point game with 4:06 left in the game, but Mills made a pair of free throws to ice the game.

The addition of the new players for the Gaels has ap-

peared to improve the performance of the veteran players on the team as well. Todd Golden continues to make good things happen for the Gaels with his hustle and three-point shooting.

Tron Smith came off the bench and led the Gaels with five assists in only 24 minutes of action. His ability to attack the basket is giving the Gaels a consistent scorer in pressure situations. Lucas Walker continues to make the most of his minutes as well, as he played only 13 minutes, but recorded five points, five rebounds, and

two steals.

Another player who continues to impress is Saint Mary's center Omar Samhan. The Gaels only have one true center, and they need him to play as many minutes as possible. So far, Samhan has been up to the challenge. In this game he set a career high with 16 rebounds. Samhan's determination and fearless rebounding helped secure a big win over Seton Hall, as Saint Mary's looks to keep their streak alive.



Todd Golden

Photo Tod Fierner



Tron Smith (23)

Photo Tod Fierner



Go Gaels!
Upcoming Sports Events at Saint Mary's College

Women's Basketball vs. Fresno State
Wednesday, Dec. 12 at 7 p.m.
McKeon Pavilion

Men's Basketball vs. Furman vs. CS Fullerton
Friday, Dec. 28 at 5 p.m.
McKeon Pavilion

Men's Basketball vs. Howard
Friday, Dec. 28 at 7:30 p.m.
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For information about upcoming season schedules, visit the official Saint Mary's athletics website at www.SMCGaels.com.

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