

## Saint Mary's Softball Suffers Tough Loss to Cal

By Kevin D. Shallat

The Saint Mary's Gaels softball team is off to a hot start in league play this year. Their 5-3 record has them tied for second with Portland State in the Pacific Coast Softball Conference.

On Wednesday, April 17, they had a chance to knock off the 23rd ranked California Golden Bears in Moraga. After Saint Mary's took a 2-0 lead after three full innings, the Gaels looked as if they might pull an upset over the Bears, but bad breaks and throwing errors eventually doomed the Gaels. Saint Mary's allowed the Golden Bears to get back in the game in the fourth inning, as Cal went on to win, 5-2.

Bronwyn Russell had another great game, as she was again the offensive catalyst for the Gaels. Russell leads the team in at bats, as well as runs scored, and has started and played in all 39 games this season.

Russell's leadoff base hit in the bottom of the first inning gave the Gaels the momentum they were looking for against a loaded Bears. Molly Bergeson then followed Russell's at bat with the first of two back to back walks. After Jenna Smith laid down a sacrifice bunt, Chelsea Loftis delivered a shot to center field to plate Russell. Lauren Clark then stepped up to the plate with the at bat of the ballgame.

Clark quickly found herself down in the count early in the at bat.



Junior Lauren Clark (20)

Photo Andy Scheck

However, she managed to stay focused, only to foul off what seemed to be a dozen balls before drawing a well earned walk. The Bears knew they didn't want to load the bases to set up a potentially big inning for the Gaels, so Cal decided to go right after Kat Delpit, which was a big mistake. Delpit jumped on a fastball and hit it up the middle into center field to record an RBI, scoring Burgeson for the second run of the game.

Megan Galloway started and finished the game on the mound for the Gaels. Galloway had the type of performance that any team would hope for against a ranked opponent. Her counterpart, Merissa Drewrey, pitched the entire game for the Bears as well. Both pitchers had great

command of their pitches for the majority of the ballgame. Galloway started off hot, but had a few tough innings later on in the game, whereas Drewrey started off shaky, but was able to finish up strong to end the game.

Cal was able to get three runs in the top of the fourth inning to put the Bears on top 3-2. Saint Mary's mishandled two straight grounders, which forced them to commit throwing errors to first base. The Gaels could have survived the inning, or at least limited the damage, but instead they gave up the lead for good.

The Bears tacked on two more runs in the top of the sixth, which was enough to secure a 5-2 win.