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Gaels Take Third in WCC Tournament Play

By Caitlin Graveson



Senior Alex Poorta was 14-7 on the year and 8-0 against WCC opponents. Photo Tod Fierner
1-0 lead.

The only Saint Mary's singles win came from Soper.

Alipaz said her team could not capitalize on critical doubles points and had a shot at winning more of the singles matches. She commented, "The Pepperdine match will take a long time to get over. [We] let some opportunities slip away. Having played and beat #1 San Diego during the season, we knew that if we could get by Pepperdine, we would have a great shot at the title."

Although disappointed with the loss in the semi-finals, Saint Mary's topped Santa Clara 4-1 the next day. The Gael captured the doubles point and took three singles wins.

The Gaels entered the tournament with a three-seed and took on the six-seeded University of Portland (9-12) on Thursday, April 21. Saint Mary's opened the match with a doubles-win. Sophomore Catherine Isip and freshman Laurie Gingras defeated the Pilot's sister-twins, Sabine Fuchs and Stephanie Fuchs, easily at 8-1. Court two recorded a win as well, Poorta and Chkhikvishvili took the match-up, 8-2.

Singles play ended just as handily. No. 48 Poorta defeated her opponent, 6-0, 6-1, freshman Jullien won 6-0, 6-2 to extend her win streak to 12, and Chkhikvishvili finished 6-3, 6-0. Jullien entered the match with a victory over top-rated Stanford.

After the win, Alipaz said, "Our girls went out today and played solid against a very good and very dangerous Portland team. They are a team you don't want to give too many chances to."

Saint Mary's entered the tournament ranked #47 overall with an 11-8 record, finishing 5-1 in WCC play, their only loss coming from Pepperdine. The Gaels notched three wins over top-75 teams, including, Texas Christian University, Boise State and San Diego. Five of the losses came to Top 25 teams including #5 UCLA and #9 Berkeley.

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