

# Saint Mary's Women's Soccer Tightens Defense, Records Tie

By Simon Tryzna



Caroline Beaulne

Photos Tod Fierner



Katy Roby



Christina Tognetti

After six tough games away from Moraga, the Saint Mary's women's soccer team finally returned home to host the Oregon Ducks (3-2-1) last weekend. Saint Mary's (3-3-1), chosen to finish sixth in the West Coast Conference by the coaches, features a young team, and Head Coach Kai Edwards put together a strong non-conference schedule in order to prepare them for a grueling WCC season.

Following a season opening 2-0 win at Portland State, Saint Mary's was outscored 9-2 in two games against Seattle and USC. However, the defense came together in a 1-0 win against Sam Houston State and then played well in a 1-0 loss to A&M.

In the final non-conference road game, the Gaels got a golden goal from Christina Tognetti for a 1-0 win on the road against Cal Poly.

Saint Mary's was unable to conjure up some late magic as they settled for a draw against Oregon, 1-1 on Sunday, September 12. The recent string of success is a direct result of better defense.

The Gaels started five fresh-

men, including two in central defense and one in goal.

"[The defense] shored it up and started to get a little more comfortable," said Coach Kai Edwards.

"We gave up only two goals our last four games," said Edwards after the game against Oregon. One of those goals was a deflection in the Oregon game, and the other was an off-sides goal against #17 Texas A&M.

The Gaels and the Ducks played a very physical match from the start on and battled it out in the midfield. Oregon displayed their speed on a counter attack, and forward Kristen Parr scored a goal in the 23rd minute to give the Ducks the lead.

Saint Mary's responded three minutes into the second half. Senior Katy Roby fooled the Ducks goal keeper off a free kick from the right box, about 20 yards out. The equalizer gave the Gaels new life and they played up-tempo for the rest of the match.

With about 17 minutes left, Saint Mary's freshman Caroline Beaulne was fouled two yards

from the box by Oregon keeper Abby Steele, who was ejected from the game with a red card. The Gaels, however, were unable to convert on the free kick and were unable to take advantage of

being a player up on the Ducks. "It's unfortunate (that we tied)," said Edwards. "There's good and bad. It was our first home game so we protected it. We went down early but we bat-

tled back and put ourselves in a position to win the game."

The Gaels return to action on September 14 and 16, hosting the Saint Mary's Tournament. They take on UC Davis on Friday at 4 p.m.

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