

LAMORINDA SPORTS

Gaels Gear Up for WCC Play

By Michael Sakoda



Matthew Dellavedova has the most three-pointers in SMC history. Photos Tod Fierner

Over the past five seasons, Saint Mary's men's basketball has a record of 142-38 and only Kansas, Duke, North Carolina and Memphis have done better, so expectations are high for this team.

"There probably are (expectations)," Bennett said. "We don't like to talk about them... but I'd much rather be dealing with that, than dealing things teams deal with when they haven't been winning."

The Gaels began this season going 9-3, losing to Pacific, Georgia Tech and Northern Iowa. Bennett noted that the team needs to continue to improve.

"This team's not where we were at the end of last year," he explained. "We have a lot of room to improve."

"If we do things right... this team has a chance to be very good. We're not a finished product; we're not close to a finished product," he added.

Losing Rob Jones has left the Gaels with big shoes to fill in the front

court. "Beau Levesque and Mitch Young are playing that spot," Bennett said. "They're getting better and better, but... we miss Rob's leadership, his toughness, his defense... hopefully they can replace that."

Despite losing Jones, the Gaels have a leader in last year's WCC Player of the Year senior guard Matthew Dellavedova. This year Dellavedova is averaging 19.8 points and six assists. He was selected to the Basketball Times 4th-team preseason All-American and All-WCC teams and is showing no sign of slowing down.

"The great thing about Matt is he's gotten better every year," Bennett said. "Sometimes guys plateau; he hasn't. Sometimes guys get worse; he definitely hasn't done that."

On Dec. 30, Saint Mary's played the front end of a back-to-back, defeating Yale (4-9) before taking on Harvard on New Year's Eve.

Dellavedova logged 24 points

and six assists on his way to school history in the win. He hit four three-pointers (239 career), moving him to No. 1 on the school's all-time list, surpassing David Sivulich (238 career). The 24 points (1,620 career) also vaulted him past Diamon Simpson (1,603 career) to fourth on the Gael's all-time scoring list.

The first half saw back and forth scoring from both sides, and the crowd held its collective breath as junior guard Stephen Holt came up limping after a collision on a fast break.

Holt was sidelined by a knee injury at the end of last season, and sat out five games this year with a bone bruise.

"It was just a contact thing," Holt said after the game. "I just ran into the board, but it was nothing too serious. I'm thankful for that."

The Gaels headed into the break with a ten point lead, 30-40.

The Gaels surged out of the locker room in the second half with a 10-0 run, extending their lead to 20. "We had to keep them off the offensive boards," Dellavedova said about the first half effort. "They killed us on that... it was a matter of focus."

From there, Saint Mary's went on cruise-control, trading baskets with Yale, who couldn't seem to battle back in the second half. Saint Mary's cruised to a 78-62 win, recording their tenth win of the season.

"It was a gritty win for us," Holt commented. "I'm very proud of the guys."

Holt was selected to the preseason All-WCC team, and if Saint Mary's is going to have the sort of run they had last year, Holt's health will be a concern. "We need him. He's a key player for us," Bennett said.

Holt had nine points and two steals in the win.

Sophomore forward Brad Waldow, junior guard Jordan Page and Levesque added ten points each.

Saint Mary's finished its preseason on Dec. 31 against Harvard, who was fresh off a win at Cal. "It will be a tough game," Bennett said before the match-up. "We need to defend. We have to be tough on the boards, and we have to take care of the ball. It always comes down to those three things."

Conference play opens on Jan. 5 when the Gaels host Loyola Marymount. The Gaels will face a tough Gonzaga team on Jan. 10 in Spokane.



Lafayette's Beau Levesque is stepping up for the Gaels.



Stephen Holt scored nine points in his second game back from injury.

Providing Insurance and Financial Services

It's no accident more people trust State Farm.



Mike Rosa, Agent
Insurance Lic. #: OF45583
1042 Country Club Drive, Moraga
925-376-2244

LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR STATE FARM IS THERE.®

PD40036 02/04 State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company (Not in NJ), Bloomington, IL

Learn the skills * Build Confidence Love the Game



Join us as Lamorinda Soccer Club, one of the TOP clubs in Northern California; host its annual **Winter Soccer Clinics**. All girls and boys between the ages of 5 to 10 - born August 1, 2001 - July 31, 2007 are invited to attend. No skills needed; just join the fun!

DATES: Saturday and Sunday starting *Saturday 1/5/2013 - 2/10/2013 (see web site for times)*

Registration: www.Lamorindasc.com Fee: \$250.00

2013 - 2014 Team tryouts for U7 - U12 Start January 2013!
Please visit www.Lamorindasc.com for dates and times!!!



Kyle Davis
Mortgage Consultant/Owner/Partner
Lamorinda Resident Since 1995
DRE License #01111347/NMLS #274107
Direct: 925-314-5299
Kyle@Stonecastle-LHF.com

319 Diablo Rd., Ste 103 • Danville • CA DRE Lic. # 01327738, NMLS#280803

RATES HAVE NEVER BEEN LOWER!

30 YEAR FIXED RATE TO \$1,000,000!

3.875% / 3.875% APR

GREAT CONFORMING RATES!

	Fixed Rates to \$417,000		Fixed Rates to \$625,500	
	RATE	APR	RATE	APR
30 Year Fixed	3.375%	3.375%	3.500%	3.500%
15 Year Fixed	2.750%	2.750%	2.875%	2.875%

"PROVIDING PREMIER LOAN PRODUCTS AND SERVICE FROM THE MOST EXPERIENCED AND SOLUTION-ORIENTED PROFESSIONALS IN YOUR COMMUNITY."

Call 925-314-5299 for Today's Quote!



Dexter Honens II
REAL ESTATE BROKER
Office: (925) 253-2148
Cell: (510) 918-8911
Email: honens@pacbell.net



Serving clients, friends and family in your neighborhood since 1989.

This is not a loan commitment, nor is it a guarantee of any kind. This comparison is based solely on estimated figures and information available at the time of production. Interest rate is subject to borrower and property qualifying. Stonecastle Land and Home Financial, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Lender.



MAGIC



EDUCATE INSPIRE EMPOWER

CALIFORNIA MAGIC SOCCER CLUB TRYOUTS

BOYS AND GIRLS AGES 6-10 TRYOUTS IN JANUARY

BOYS AND GIRLS AGES 11-14 TRYOUTS IN FEBRUARY

ALL ARE WELCOME

Please join us for an Informational Open House

Wednesday, January 9th from 6:00 to 8:00pm

At the Lafayette Library (Community Room)

Register online at

www.CalMagicSC.com