

Saint Mary's Women Take on UOP in Soccer Exhibition

By Kevin D. Shallat

The Saint Mary's women's soccer team played their first game of the season on Friday, Aug. 24, in Saint Mary's Stadium, losing 2-1 to the University of Pacific in the exhibition match.

Looking sharp early on in the contest, the Gaels received strong play from Jessica Menzhuber (midfielder/forward) and Allie Weiner (forward). Weiner had a terrific first half, being active on the offensive and defensive side of the ball. On one play Weiner was able to head the ball straight down to keep the ball away from a potential scorer which might have saved a goal early on in the game. Soon after that play Menzhuber kicked a fantastic centering pass to Weiner which she headed toward the goal, but it was eventually blocked.

Just before half, the duo of forwards would again connect on a play, and this time the shot tumbled in for a goal. Weiner scored an assist as she lofted a beautiful pass to Menzhuber who kicked a fantastic shot that went past the goalkeeper and into the net. The two players were everywhere Friday night, but the Gaels could not come up with any more goals.

Unfortunately the Gaels gave up the lead in the second half as Saint Mary's broke down defensively and allowed the Tigers to tie up the game. Pacific forward Carla Vellutini evened the score at 1-1 in the 59th minute. The momentum quickly changed in UOP's



Jessica Menzhuber

Photo courtesy of Saint Mary's Athletics

favor. The Gaels still played well, but the few defensive miscues cost them a few scores, and eventually the game. The Gaels were on the defensive end of the field when a Saint Mary's player tried to kick the ball back to their own goalkeeper, but a UOP player got to the ball first and chipped the ball in for an easy go ahead goal.

Coach Kelly Lindsey was optimistic after the game. "It was a great day to play soccer," she said. Lindsey has nine freshmen on the team, so evaluating all of the new talent is a tall task, but she was able

to accomplish her goal of getting every player in the game. Lindsey mentioned it's too early to tell what to expect from this team after only one game, but she felt good about the team after watching them play, saying "We created a lot of chances by slipping people in."

The Gaels play in the third best conference in the nation, with games times normally late in the afternoons and early evenings on Fridays, or mid-day on Sundays. You can check the men's and women's schedule online at www.SMCGaels.com.

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