

## Saint Mary's Women Lose Heartbreaker to UCSB

By Kevin D. Shallat

In a spirited match, Saint Mary's women's volleyball took on the U.C. Santa Barbara Gouchos in its home opener on Sept. 13 in McKeeon Pavilion, but lost the contest 3-2 in the fifth game of a best-out-of-five format.

The Gaels won the first two games of the match, recording a 30-26 score in each game. In the first two games, Saint Mary's had 38 kills, to Santa Barbara's 21, with Gaels outside hitters Megan York and Taylor Groess at 12 and seven kills respectively in those games.

It seemed as if Saint Mary's was well on their way towards beating the Gouchos. At the break, Santa Barbara knew the match was on the line. Down 2-0, they would

have to pick up their play, or the match would be over.

They returned looking like a new and improved team.

Even with the inspired play by the Gouchos, Saint Mary's hung tough and led for a good portion of the game. At one point in the third game, the Gaels took a three point lead to make it 16-13.

The Gaels, however, could not maintain their stellar play, despite the fact that they had no glaring mistakes, and the Gouchos had a number of unforced serving errors. The Gaels dropped the next three games to lose the match.

Freshman sensation York, however, continued to impress, leading the team in a career high with 26 kills. She

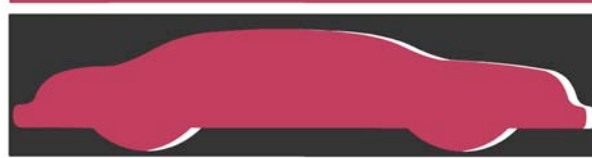
also had 17 digs while recording her sixth double-double of the season. Setter Kapua Kama'ono led the team with 17 assists. Middle blocker Megan Burton was very active, and had a solid game with 13 kills. Libero Alita Fisher also played a gritty match, recording 25 digs on the night.

Junior outside hitter Groess was a real catalyst for the Gaels in this game, with many timely kills. As one of the elder players on this young Gaels team, Groess brings energy, confidence, and fun to the games.

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