

Saint Mary's Men Battle #21 Gonzaga

By Kevin D. Shallat



Jared Medina (6), Goal Keeper Brian Mason, Justin Kim (17)

Photo Tod Fierner

The Saint Mary's men's soccer team began West Coast Conference play on Friday, Oct. 5, hosting the Bulldogs of Gonzaga University. Although Saint Mary's was able to grind out a tough match against the 21st ranked team in the nation, the Gaels lost the match 1-0 on a hard luck goal.

The game started off shaky for the Gaels as Gonzaga was able to control the ball in Saint Mary's territory for much of the opening period. It looked as if the Gaels were in for a long afternoon.

However, after the first few minutes of the game the Gaels seemed to realize that they were plenty good enough to have a shot at winning this game. Gael midfielder Erik Robert did a good job of forcing the ball into Bulldog territory, as he made some nice passes on the run to set up his fellow teammates. Midfielder Dylan Leslie had a couple of nice shots on goal, including one penalty kick, which was stopped by the Gonzaga goalkeeper. Standout Gael goalkeeper Brian Mason was able to help keep the game tied at 0-0 going into the half.

The second half was even more impressive than the first, as the Gaels had possession of the ball for much of the half. Midfielder Justin Kim was a spark

plug for the Gaels, as he was able to cut right down the middle of the Gonzaga defense throughout the second half. One of the shots by Kim looked as if it was going in, as it was hammered toward the Gonzaga goal. Their goalie was able to stop a sure goal by leaping up and over, completely outstretched, to save a goal for the Bulldogs.

Despite the Gaels impressive defense, Saint Mary's caught a bad break in their own territory when Gonzaga midfielder Grant Lundberg kicked a shot on goal that was completely blocked by a Saint Mary's defender. The ball bounced away, but it had a funny spin to it, and wound up rolling parallel to the goal line. The ball looked like a bunted baseball rolling down the base line, teetering on the edge of fair or foul. Unfortunately for the Gaels, the ball rolled the wrong way across the line and into the Saint Mary's goal.

The good news? There was plenty enough time for the Gaels to come back. With 3:50 left to play, Robert had an opportunity to tie the game on a nice shot on goal, but the Gonzaga goalkeeper again denied the Gaels a chance to tie.

The last good opportunity came on a corner kick to freshman Kyle Deremer, who did a great job in heading the ball toward the net,

but the ball sailed up and over the goal. The Gaels went on to lose this one in a hard fought loss by a score of 1-0.

Catch the next Gaels game by checking the schedule online at: www.SMCGaels.com



Erik Robert (3)

Photo Tod Fierner