

Saint Mary's Men Win In Final Five Seconds

By Kevin D. Shallat



L to R: Coley Heldreth (2), Kurt Thompson (26), David Blanchard (7)

Photo Tod Fierner

The Saint Mary's men's soccer team finished up their season Sunday, Nov. 18 on a high note against the Loyola Marymount Lions. The Gaels came from behind to score a goal in the last five seconds of regulation to break up the tie and win this game, 2-1.

The Gaels beat the Lions in Los Angeles in October, but found themselves down 1-0 in this game mid-way through the first half. Loyola Marymount's Rafael Baca took a shot that caromed off the cross bar, but leaked back into the field of play where Steffen Canty was there to kick the ball into the upper right corner of the goal for the Lion's lone score of the game.

The Gaels nearly tied the score in the first half after a wild succession of headers. Corey Heldreth was able to head the ball to teammate Justin Kim who headed the ball on a line toward the goal, but the Lion's Alex Proano was standing inside the goal line where he took one step out and headed the ball away in what would have been a sure goal for Saint Mary's. Despite a seemingly equal time of possession, the Lions would keep the lead and head into the half with 1-0 advantage.

It was senior day for the

Gaels, and the last game of the season for both squads, so the game was very physical, and the referees called the game accordingly. There were a total of 32 fouls in the game, including two red cards. The Gaels actually had two more fouls in this game than the Lions, but the Gaels were able to capitalize on the penalties. The Lions may have been frustrated by their tough season, as two of their players received red cards, and were ejected from the game.

Some of Loyola Marymount's frustration may have come after the Gaels tied the score. Nick Cashmere took a shot that was deflected, and Mark Araujo hit a header that bounced off the cross bar and towards the goal line. The Saint Mary's fans thought that the Gaels were robbed, but rejoiced after a controversial call from the referee, who motioned that the ball dropped inside the goal line for a game tying score.

The Gaels got another penalty call in their favor with five seconds to go in regulation, with the game tied at 1-1. Justin Kim looked like he was going to be the one to kick the penalty shot, but at the last second Eric Robert kicked a screaming shot that tailed back

into the goal and into the upper middle portion of the net for an untouched game winning goal. "We put our best left footer on it, one of our most confident strikers. He saw the upper corner and put it home for us," said goalkeeper Brian Mason.

Mason also wanted to thank his teammates, as this was his last game as a Gael. "Thank you for a wonderful, wonderful, amazing experience," said Mason.



Dylan Leslie (4)

Photo Tod Fierner