

# Saint Mary's Upends 12th Ranked Oregon Ducks

By Kevin D. Shallat



Gaels stun No 12 Oregon

Photo Tod Fierner



Patrick Mills (13)

Photo Tod Fierner

The Gaels looked to continue their unbeaten streak this season as they hosted the University of Oregon Ducks on Tuesday, Nov. 20. Freshman Patrick Mills made history by scoring 37 points, more than any other Gael freshman in history, as he led Saint Mary's past Oregon 99-87 in front of a sold-out crowd at McKeon Pavilion.

Every player who stepped onto the floor for the Gaels made an impact in this game, but none was more spectacular and jaw dropping than Saint Mary's freshman Patrick Mills. The Australian born point guard, who will be playing for Australia in the 2008 Beijing Olympics, put on a shooting display for a global TV audience (which aired on ESPNU) – as well as for seven NBA scouts in the stands.

"I guess he knew it was on TV in Australia, so he was ready," said Saint Mary's head coach Randy Bennett. Mills shot 50 percent from the field, dropped 13-14 free throws, dished out five assists, recorded two steals, scored 37 points in 37 minutes, and had only one turnover.

"I knew playing against guys like him, (Tajuan Porter) that it would also step my game up," Mills said, "so I'm very grateful to go to those guys and take it to them. It was just a great learning experience."

The Gaels did a great job to compete, basket for basket, against a speedy and athletic Oregon team. Sophomore center Omar Samhan contributed in the first half by making a number of difficult fadeaway shots to set the tone early in the game.

Forward Maarty Leunen started off hot for the Ducks and was able to

keep Oregon in the game, as he totaled seven points and eight rebounds in the first half.

However, Oregon's standout guard, Tajuan Porter, was neutralized for most of the game by a stellar Gael defense.

The game went back and forth in the first half, as neither team was able to break away. The Gaels headed into the locker room at halftime with a 38-35 advantage over the Ducks.

The high flying and energetic duo of Samhan and forward Diamon Simpson would come up big in the second half. Simpson would finish with 18 points, 12 rebounds, two blocks, and two steals. Samhan would finish with 16 points and five rebounds. When the score reached 68-56 in favor of the Gaels, the gym took on a frenzied atmosphere, with one half of the gym yelling "go," and the other half yelling "Gaels." However, the fans would soon become quiet as Leunen was able to make a lay-up for Oregon to cut the lead to 72-64.

Saint Mary's received a quick boost from forward Lucas Walker, who came off the bench and scored back to back lay-ups. With the help of Mills' record breaking performance, and Todd Golden's rock steady defense and heads up play, the Gaels took this game in convincing fashion, 99-87.



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