

## St. Mary's Rugby Hangs Tough In Loss To Cal

By Kevin D. Shallat



Photo Tod Fierner

The Saint Mary's Rugby squad made the short trip from Moraga to Berkeley for a match-up that featured the fourth ranked Gaels against the number one ranked Goliah, California. It was a dream atmosphere for everybody in attendance Saturday, Feb. 16, as both teams have a rich sporting history, and a promising future.

The two teams are only 14 miles apart, but find themselves linked by the rankings that have both teams in the top five, nationally. Despite only scoring five points in the first half, the Gaels were able to fight back and hold their heads high, as they scored 22 points against the juggernaut of Cal Rugby. The Gaels were able to record 17 points in the second half without their best player, Kevin Swiryn, who was unable to play in the match because of a previous injury. However, the Cal offense proved too much for Saint Mary's, as the Golden Bears finished off the Gaels by a score of 78-22.

After soaking up the atmosphere and taking in the sights, the game began and reality soon set in for the Gaels, as they found themselves down 7-0 in the opening minutes.

After two penalty kicks the Bears jumped out to a 13-0 lead. Before the first half hour of play the Bears were able to run the score up to 39-0.

The Bears eventually raised the score to 44-0 before Saint Mary's was able to get on the board. Despite the score, there was no panic in Saint Mary's Fullback Matt Leatherby, as

he stepped up and told his teammates to hold their heads high and play hard. Shortly thereafter, the Gaels were able to punch the ball in for a try. Tate Sonilia was able to record the first of two tries on the day for Saint Mary's. The Gaels headed into halftime trailing the Bears, 44-5.

The Gaels were able to pull

their offense together in the second half and make a game out of it. Matt Hensley recorded the first points of the second half with a try for the Gaels. Saint Mary's then recorded seven more points on a penalty by Cal's Rikus Pretorius, who made a late tackle on a Gael after kicking the ball. This cut the score to 44-17. The short-handed Gaels did a tremendous job to keep the Golden Bears scoreless in the second half for almost 15 minutes. Rob Carlson had a fine day for the Gaels, as his quick tackles helped neutralize the pass, thus preventing Cal's offense from gaining ground.

Cal's lead grew to 66-17 before Sonilia was able to dive in for one more try, cutting the Bear's lead to 66-22. Blake McGahan made a great one-handed catch that started the Gael surge toward the home sideline. Sonilia caught the last pass of the drive and beat everybody else to the corner, as he touched the ball down for the Gaels' last score of the day.

