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Gaels Fall to Broncos

By Mikaela Cowles





SMC's Mark Anderson Photo Tod Fierner

The Gaels concluded conference play against the Broncos on Sunday, May 10th. Senior day wasn't so sweet for Saint Mary's as they fell to their Santa Clara rivals 8-2.

Nathan Gonzales took the mound for the Gaels, giving up two runs in the first. Santa Clara didn't calm down and Gonzales gave up another two runs before head coach Jedd Soto pulled him.

With Mark Anderson on the mound for Gonzales in the middle of the second inning, Saint Mary's began to fight back. Anthony Aliotti hit a lead off home run to right center in the bottom of the third as the Gaels cut the Broncos lead to 3. Aliotti earned a new career high with six home runs on the season.

The Gaels left Anderson on the mound a little too long as he began to struggle in the top of the 9th, giving up 3 earned runs. Jimmy Munill came in for Saint Mary's to close out the 9th, but the Gaels were unable to fight back. Santa Clara's Alex Rivers wound up the bottom of the 9th one-two-three to finish his complete game.

The Gaels opened their non-conference season 11-14. With the 22nd toughest schedule in the nation the Gaels still earned the most number of wins since 1991. Beating Nevada on their way into West Coast Conference play, Saint Mary's came out strong against Portland. Despite a good start in conference, the Gaels struggled at the end of the season. Saint Mary's finished conference play 9-12, a definite improvement from their 8-13 finish last year. Despite the improvement the Gaels are left with little hope of post-season play, finishing 6th in the conference.

The Gaels are 28-26 on the season, an improvement from their .500 record in 2008. The loss of four seniors will be felt next year, particularly Bryan Justice's presence on the mound and Corry Miller's speed in the outfield. Even with the loss of two such key players, the Gaels have high hopes for next year. Soto says, "We have a lot of freshman coming in so that's only going to up the pressure and increase our depth."

Returning 31 players, Saint Mary's will be ripe with experience. The highlight return of next season is freshman sensation Troy Channing. Channing broke the single season homerun record with 16 against Loyola Marymount on Sunday, April 26th, and didn't stop there. He earned his 20th against Santa Clara this past Saturday.



Seniors with their families at SMC's Senior Day Photo Tod Fierner

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