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Gaels Undefeated on Road

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Ben Allen was one of three Gaels to spark a comeback in the second half against SJSU Photo Tod Fierner

The Saint Mary's Gaels secured their first road win of the season on November 30th with a 78-71 second half comeback victory against the San Jose State Spartans at Walt McPherson Court.

Saint Mary's senior guard Wayne Hunter scored the game's first field goal just seven seconds into the game, but the Spartans held onto the lead the rest of the half, gaining their largest advantage after a lay-up by senior guard Mac Peterson with 1:51 to go in the half, 43-27.

Junior forward C.J. Webster had 12 points in the half and junior center Chris Oakes had 10, spearheading the Spartans' early lead and contributing to San Jose State's 12 point half-time advantage over the Gaels.

The Gaels shot just 20 percent from the 3-point line and 40.6 percent overall in the first half, compared to San Jose's 59.4 percent total field goal percentage.

"I think we started off slow," said Saint Mary's senior guard Wayne Hunter. "Our defense just wasn't there, and if you don't play defense, you don't win games."

The second half brought a turn-around defensive effort by the Gaels and a ten point run early in the half led by senior forward Ben Allen, senior center Omar Samhan and junior guard Mickey McConnell. The three racked up a combined ten points in just over three minutes while holding the Spartans scoreless on defense.

The Gaels took the lead with 11:42 to go in the game after a 3-pointer by freshman guard Matthew Dellavedova making it 54-52. San Jose State briefly regained the lead with 9:19 left to play, but the Gaels continued their offensive momentum and with 2:51 to go in the game had a nine point advantage over the Spartans.

San Jose State came within four points of the Gaels with 1:27 left in the game, but strong post defense and field goals by Saint Mary's Samhan and Dellavedova and foul shots by McConnell secured the Gaels' comeback win.

"We didn't panic," said Saint Mary's Head Coach Randy Bennett.

"That is why we won the game. We kept our composure and we hit big shots."

Saint Mary's defeated the Utah State Aggies 68-63 in Logan on Saturday. A 3-pointer by freshman forward Clint Steindl with 36 seconds to go in the game secured the win for the Gaels at Dee Glen Smith Spectrum. The win ended a 37-game home winning streak for Utah State-a statistic the Aggies have maintained since 2007.

The Gaels are currently 6-1 and head to Eugene this weekend to take on the Pac-10's Oregon Ducks (4-3).

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