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SMC Softball Wins Division

By Justine Sgalio



An RBI single by sophomore first baseman Mandy Camuso pushed the Gaels' lead to 7-4 in the first victory over Portland State on Saturday. Photo Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's sophomore left fielder Michelle Mounts hit a two-run home run to tie the game 2-2 in the bottom of the first inning. Trailing 3-2 in the bottom of the second after Vikings Campos' RBI single, Saint Mary's capitalized on two Portland State errors, scoring four unearned runs. Saint Mary's sophomore Kayla Gonzales' bases-loaded RBI single broke a 3-3 tie and Mounts followed with a two-run double to give Saint Mary's a 6-3 lead.

The Vikings scored one run in the fifth, but the Gaels answered back with an RBI single by sophomore first baseman Mandy Camuso and would go on to win 7-4.

"This is a true testament to how hard our girls have worked all year," said Saint Mary's head coach Jessica Hanaseth, who before the game was named PCSC Coastal Division Coach of the Year. "For them to be able to re-focus after losing game one and bounce back with two wins today was amazing. I'm so proud of them."

Linton was named the Most Outstanding Pitcher of the series and Sabatini was named the Most Outstanding Player.

Linton was also named the PCSC Coastal Division Pitcher of the Year, Mounts was named to the All-PCSC First Team and Smith was named the PCSC Coastal Division Co-player of the Year.

"It [winning PCSC Coastal Division Co-player of the Year] was a big surprise," said Smith. "It feels good. It's amazing."

The Gaels traveled to UCLA this weekend to take part in their first ever NCAA Tournament, meeting the 40-11 UCLA Bruins. UCLA is the No. 5 seed in the tournament NCAA tournament and finished with a 14-7 record in the Pacific-10 Conference. Leading UCLA's offense is first baseman/pitcher Megan Langenfeld, who enters the tournament with a .510 average and leads the team with 14 home runs. In the circle, Bruins pitcher Donna Kerr has a 17-7 overall record and maintains a 2.31 earned run average, boasting 168 strikeouts.

The Gaels fell 11-4 Friday to the No. 5 UCLA Bruins for their first loss of the double-elimination NCAA tournament. Saint Mary's was hitless through the fourth, but rallied back in the fifth scoring four runs on three hits. Smith hit a solo home run to put the Gaels on the board and UCLA pitcher Donna Kerr walked junior Maryanne Cronin and hit Whitney Heuser to load the bases for Sabatini who hit a stand-up double down the left field line, scoring Jessica Lemmon and Cronin to make it 5-3 UCLA. Fellow Gonzales followed with a bunt single to third and with two outs, Heuser scored from third to get the Gaels within one of the Bruins. But it wasn't enough to overcome the Bruins, who would score three in the fifth and sixth innings to defeat the Gaels 11-4.

The Saint Mary's Gaels clinched their first ever Pacific Coast Softball Conference title, defeating the Portland State Vikings in a best-of-three series May 14 and 15. The win gave the Gaels an automatic NCAA Tournament bid for the first time in school history.

The Gaels fell to the Vikings 1-0 on Friday after a seventh inning RBI single by Brandi Campos ended a pitcher's duel between Saint Mary's sophomore Britany Linton and Portland State's Anna Bertrand. The Gaels had chances to score in the first and sixth innings but weren't able to deliver.

But despite the tough loss, the Gaels came out strong on Saturday and forced game three after defeating the Vikings 3-0 in game two. Saint Mary's took advantage of two Portland State errors in the first and third innings, giving the Gaels two of their three runs.

The first run came in the first inning when Portland State's De'Chauna Skinner misplayed a ground ball hit by Saint Mary's senior catcher Jenna Smith, allowing Gaels sophomore shortstop Rebecca Sabatini to score from second and give the Gaels the 1-0 lead over the Vikings. In the third inning, a throwing error allowed Sabatini to reach base and later score on a sacrifice fly by Smith. Smith went 1-2 with two RBI's and Sabatini went 3-for-4 with two doubles and scored all three of Saint Mary's runs.

After the Vikings took an early 2-0 lead in the deciding game three,

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