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Gaels Pitcher Improves on Season

By Bryant West



Martin Agosta Photo Tod Fierner

Saint Mary's baseball head coach Jedd Soto offered high praise for pitcher Martin Agosta after the sophomore's eight-inning shutout in the 1-0 win over Portland on Saturday.

"That was probably, without question, his best performance of the year," Soto said. "He's been good, all year long, but today he used every pitch and he did it in every count. I really tip my cap to him."

Agosta has already thrown two complete games earlier in the year and had been named WCC Pitcher of the Week twice for his efforts.

When told of his coach's praise and asked if he thought it was his best performance, Agosta chuckled.

"I don't think so..." he said. "I think I had a walk, and I left some pitches out there... it was pretty good, though, but I don't think my best."

But best-game-questions aside, Agosta threw a strong game and was a big reason the Gaels got the 1-0 win late Saturday afternoon, May 7. They'd already lost twice to the Pilots earlier in the weekend - a 8-3 loss on Friday and a 3-2 loss in the first game on Saturday morning - but those runs would be all they'd get for the series as Agosta (and relief pitcher Patrick Keane, who came in in the ninth) held the Pilots scoreless in the final game.

"I feel pretty good, I executed my pitches when I needed too and threw well," Agosta said. "I just tried to execute on my pitches... if I make a good pitch, they're not going to hit them. I tip my hat to the defense; they made some great plays behind me and came up big."

Agosta started slow in the season. He lost his first three games, including a 10-2 shellacking by UCLA on March 12 in which he gave up six runs on seven hits in just one inning. But he's turned it around, going 5-2 since the UCLA loss. His ERA fell from 6.00 after the losses to 2.21 on the season after the win against Portland. His total ERA currently sits at second in the WCC, just behind Gonzaga's Cody Martin who held a .88 ERA going into this week.

Agosta was named WCC Pitcher of the Week twice in April. The first came the week of April 4th, after a 2-0 win against Southern Utah that went down as both his first complete game and first career shutout as he posted five strikeouts and just four hits in the victory. His second award came just two weeks later, the week of April 25th, after he bested #24 Gonzaga 12-1 in Spokane in his second career complete game. He scattered eight hits, one run and struck out three.

Agosta was confident about his play after Saturday's win and admitted he felt more comfortable this year than he was his freshman season, when he went 3-6 with a 5.40 ERA. "Last year I was kind of thrown in the mix as a freshman, kind of got my stuff pushed in a little, but I learned from my mistakes and definitely better this season... experience has helped so much, it's unreal."

"Early on in the year he struggled in his first couple of outings, but since those first couple, he's really got it going," Soto said. "He's really turned the page and become the guy we thought he was going to be. We're really proud of him."

Martin and the Gaels continue their long home stand this week. They played yesterday against Cal Poly and have a home series against Loyola Marymount this weekend. The Gaels sit at 19-24 on the year and 6-9 in the WCC.

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