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## SMC Clutch in Final Seconds; Beat the Zags Gaels undefeated in WCC

By Simon Tryzna



Junior guard Jackie Nared led the Gaels with 17 points and nine rebounds in the win. Photos Tod Fierner

five point lead. A three pointer with 8:01 left gave the visitors their largest lead of the game at 46-38. Then the Gaels' energy returned.

"We started to pick it up when we had work to do," said Nared.

Senior guard Kate Gaze hit a three and Mauldin made a pair of free throws to cut the lead to within three. After both teams traded buckets, sophomore forward Carli Rosenthal hit a pair of free throws to make it a one point game, 47-48.

With the Gaels down 48-51, Gaze hit a jump shot to trim the deficit to one. Saint Mary's had two looks to score the go-ahead basket, but missed both shots.

However, with 18.8 seconds left, Mauldin was fouled after grabbing a key offensive rebound. To the delight of the home crowd, she made both of her free throws to give the Gaels a 52-51 lead.

"We constantly work on free throws," said head coach Paul Thomas after the game. "We shoot pressure free throws every single day and it has paid off in the last couple of days."

With time left remaining, Gonzaga was able to draw up a play and got a good look at a go-ahead basket. They missed the shot and Nared got the rebound. She was immediately fouled and proceeded to make her two free throws to give the Gaels the win.

"It was obviously very exciting to get the win," said Thomas. "I think our kids feel really, really good about it."

The Gaels host USD (2-2 in WCC) on Jan. 17 at 7 p.m. and Pepperdine (1-2 in WCC) on Jan. 19 at 2 p.m.

After navigating a difficult non-conference slate and earning a 9-3 record, the Gaels opened up conference play with two huge road victories over Loyola Marymount and San Francisco to improve to 11-3 on the season. Their reward for two tough road matchups was a home date with rival Gonzaga (12-5), who entered the game undefeated in conference play.

The Gaels stepped up to the challenge and continued their winning ways, improving to 3-0 in conference play. Junior forward Danielle Mauldin hit the game-tying and go-ahead free throws with 18.8 seconds remaining and junior guard Jackie Nared put the game away with two late free-throws to give Saint Mary's a 54-51 win.

"I am so happy we pulled it off," said Mauldin. "I just did not want to lose to Gonzaga. I was going to do anything to pull off the game."

Mauldin and Nared led the way with a combined 29 points and 28 rebounds.

"It was a battle," said Nared. "We worked hard. We talked about how we wanted to come out with a lot of energy."

The Gaels used that energy to build a 29-24 lead at halftime. But the energy seemed to disappear as the second half opened and the Zags used a 10-0 run to give themselves a



Junior forward Danielle Mauldin tied a career-high, notching 17 rebounds.

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