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Gaels Off to Rocky Start in Preseason

By Michael Sakoda



Caroline Beaulne began the season hot, scoring two goals in six games. Vicki Shimus recorded an assist in the game against Cal. Melinda Madden scored a goal to tie the game against Cal. Photos Tod Fierner

On Sept. 22, the Gaels dropped a second half heartbreaker, 2-4, to No. 12 California. Senior Melinda Madden hit an equalizer in the 62nd minute, but Cal stormed back to win.

The good news is the Gaels have some added fire power in their arsenal. "Caroline Beaulne missed the first four games last year because she was competing in the under 20 World Cup," explained Edwards.

Beaulne ended last season with two goals and four assists, but has already made waves going for two goals, two assists in her first six games.

"She's all-preseason," said Edwards. "We expect another level out of her. She's definitely one of our most dangerous and talented strikers."

The team is also motivated by a motto, "MTXE," standing for "Mental Toughness, Extra Effort."

"We preach that, every game, every halftime," said sophomore centerback Casidee Lynch. "It's about accountability to the pursuit of perfection. We hold each other accountable on the field and know the standard we have to play at."

Despite the rough start, the team's attitude remains optimistic.

"I think our best game was at Denver. We didn't win, but that's not what we remember," said Amanda Glass, a fifth-year transfer from Cal. "We came out hard and kept that intensity up...we were really organized, doing a good job attacking, a good job defending."

The non-conference schedule notwithstanding, the road ahead will be tough for St. Mary's.

"I think we have a lot to prove to ourselves and to our school in the conference," said Edwards. "If we hold ourselves to a high standard, we have the talent to be a middle of the pack in the WCC which historically gets about four or five teams in the NCAA Tournament."

Currently, the WCC boasts three top-25 teams: No. 11 BYU, No. 16 Portland, No. 22 Santa Clara. Pepperdine is also receiving votes.

Saint Mary's hosts Cal Poly on Friday, Sept. 27 at 4 p.m.

After a hard season last year, the Saint Mary's College women's soccer team looks to bounce back, but has one of the Top-10 most difficult schedules in the nation and has already faced some tough opponents.

After a 3-0 shutout in the opening match against Grand Canyon on Aug. 23, the Gaels (3-7) took to the road. Saint Mary's faced top competition and lost four of five games, all shutouts. They fell 0-1 to No. 11 San Diego State, 0-2 to No. 16 Denver, 0-2 to No. 25 Colorado, and 0-3 to No. 22 Marquette.

"We lost four of our first six games to top 25 teams on the road...which proves we're not a top 25 team on the road," said head coach Kai Edwards.

The Gaels did pick up a win on the trip, defeating Loyola Chicago 3-0 on Sept. 8.

Still, Edwards is hopeful. "What I'd like is for us to rise to the challenge and fix moments of games," he explained. "We didn't lose any of those games because for 90 minutes a team took it to us. We lost them in 1-2 second let downs on our part."

The Gaels returned home and defeated New Mexico 1-0 on Sept. 13, but then lost three straight. They dropped a game 0-2 to Lehigh on Sept. 15 at home before traveling to No. 2 Stanford where they lost 0-5 on Sept. 19.



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