

# St. Mary's Basketball Teams Looking for Late-Season Burst

By Dean Boerner



Sophomore Emmett Naar has played a big role in the Gaels' success this winter.

Despite their respective successes this season, neither Saint Mary's basketball team is completely satisfied with their progress to this point. With just a few weeks left before the WCC tournament, both squads recognize the importance of finishing the season strong.

For the men's team (22-4 overall, 13-3 WCC), it's all about reviving a conference-leading offense that's been somewhat dormant lately.

"Our offense has been a little bit stagnant as opposed to what it was earlier in the season," said sophomore center Jock Landale.

In many games in the second half of the season, the Gaels have had trouble reaching their team averages of 76 points and 18 assists per game. Nevertheless, the Gaels are still vying with Gonzaga for the top spot in the conference standings.

With a win over LMU earlier in

the month, Saint Mary's reached the 20-win mark for the ninth consecutive season. With four players averaging in double figures and two more sitting at nine points per game, the Gaels feature a balanced attack that many teams struggle with.

"We just enjoy playing together," said forward Dane Pineau. "I think that's why it's such a balanced spread. We have pretty good guard play which helps move the ball as well."

The Saint Mary's starting backcourt, consisting of Emmett Naar and Joe Rahon, accounts for about 12 of the team's 18 assists per game. Such adept guard-play leads to endless open looks for a team where almost everyone is a three-point threat.

In addition to rejuvenating their offense as the season winds to a close, the Gaels will work on playing a full game and avoiding in-game lulls. "One of the big things

we've been harping on in the locker room is that we haven't been able to play through an entire game like we were before Portland," said Landale.

The Portland game Landale refers to is an 89-74 late January win over the Pilots in which the Gaels registered 19 assists and shot 62 percent. If there is a model game that typifies the Saint Mary's offense, that Portland game is it.

With narrow wins on the road over Portland and Gonzaga this past week, the Gaels are now in driver's seat for the WCC's top spot. Saturday marked the Gaels' first regular season sweep over the Zags in 21 years.

Like the men's team, the women's team (21-6 overall, 12-4 WCC) is positioned nicely in the regular season's closing weeks. While the top spot held by BYU is out of reach, second place is attainable.

"I think we can still definitely

get the second seed," said sophomore guard Stella Beck. "We just have to end really strong."

Beck has had to assume more of a scoring role lately in the absence of injured leading scorer Lauren Nicholson, and she has responded with impressive totals. On the road against LMU earlier in the month, Beck scored a career-high 27 points on 10-11 shooting.

To head into the WCC tournament as the second seed, Saint Mary's will have to maintain their rebounding advantage while limiting turnovers, a weakness all season. They'll also have to work on playing a full game.

"We need to play great from the first half to the second half," said junior guard Devyn Galland.

"We can't just try to pull it out in the fourth quarter." Both Beck and Galland point to a February 11 loss against Pepperdine as a bit of a wakeup call. "We were feeling really

good up until we lost to Pepperdine," said Beck.

In that 62-58 loss to the Waves, the Gaels fell behind early and couldn't overcome a second half deficit. "We had a ton of turnovers that game," said Galland. "We came out too relaxed and then tried to come out in the fourth quarter, but it was too late."

The Gaels seem unlikely to revert to that type of play with their remaining games, as they're focused on positioning themselves nicely for the postseason tournament. On Saturday, the Gaels dismantled Portland by 42 points, its largest margin of victory in 17 seasons.

The men finish their regular season with a home game against Grand Canyon University at 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 1, while the women end regular season play against USF at 1 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27.



Devyn Galland

Photos Tod Fierner

## Miramonte Pole Vaulters Sets Indoor School Record

Submitted by Doug Bockmiller



Photo provided

On Jan. 16, at the annual Pole Vault Summit in Sparks, Nevada, Miramonte senior Molly Colwell broke the indoor pole vault school record with a jump of 10-foot-2-inches. The event attracts more than 3000 pole-vaulters every year, from all over the world for training clinics and competitions. Colwell also did a 10-foot-6-inch jump, but the bar fell off a few seconds after she landed in the pit. This spring, she has set her sights on the school outdoor record of 11-feet-6-inches, and is well on her way to breaking it. Molly is also a ranked competitive sailor and trains year round for both events. Other Miramonte Pole Vault Club vaulters participated in the event, including: senior Sam Whiting (12-feet-6-inches), junior Mathew Immesoete (12-feet-10-inches), freshman Thomas Erisman (9-feet-2-inches), and freshman Daniel Erisman (seven feet).

## MBA to Host Opening Day Parade Feb. 27

Submitted by Lauren Fritch



The Moraga Baseball Association (MBA) is hosting its Opening Day Parade on Saturday, Feb. 27 from 9:30-10 a.m. The parade will feature over 250 Moraga baseball players ages 6-14, with graduating eighth graders riding in convertibles, music by the Joaquin Moraga Band, and the Moraga Fire and Police Departments.

## St. Monica 3rd Grade Boys CYO Team Wins Diocese Championship

Submitted by Laura Revelos



Back, from left: Mark Robeson, Shawn Clancy, Eric Van Olst Middle: Cooper Chang, Joe Revelos, Max Robeson, Gian Maguire, Kai Van Olst, Anthony Sanguinetti Front: Blaise Clancy, Luke Bonardi. Photo Mike Bonardi

On Jan. 31, the third-grade St. Monica Spartans American basketball team completed a perfect season by winning the CYO West Diablo League Championship.

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