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SMC's Erich Storti runs with the ball; in back, from left: Hunter Chulantseff, Josh Allen and Karl Keane

Photo Grace Kiesel

Saint Mary's rugby team heads to national championships

By Jon Kingdon

There were two things on the minds of the Saint Mary's rugby team when they went to Berkeley to play Cal in the national semifinal championship game – making it to the championship game and exacting revenge against Cal for their only loss this season.

The Gaels scored in the first two minutes of the game and toward the end of the half, they were up 28-0 before Cal scored a goal, but missed their try, to make the score 28-5 heading in to the second half. "I was pretty much surprised when the score was 28-0 early on," Saint Mary's head coach Tim O'Brien said. "A lot of breaks came our way in the first half, but we almost penalized ourselves off the field in the second half."

The adjustments O'Brien made from the first time they played Cal proved effective. "The last time we played Cal, we made some errors that we wanted to correct," O'Brien said. "We wanted to play vertical rugby this game. We played the way we trained, and we wanted to drive the tempo."

After Cal scored the first three times in the second half to close the score to 28-26, the Gaels defense settled down. ... continued on Page A10

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Broad smiles greet Brook Street Park reopening in Lafayette



Photo Sharon Sobotta

City staff, commissioners and council members at Brook Street Park on April 18.

By Sharon K. Sobotta

As the mother of two toddlers and a Lafayette Elementary School kindergartener, Zinab Lagab couldn't be more thrilled that Brook Street Park is officially open and ready for play.

Lagab moved from Oakland to Lafayette because she thought it would be a great place for her children to go to school. "When we got here two years ago, this park was just wood chips and we're so excited that the park is officially opening," Lagab says while attending the ribbon cutting ceremony of the reimagined airport themed park on April 18. Lagab lives in an apartment complex on the east side of town, about a 10-minute walk from the park. Like many in the city, Lagab longed for an outdoor space to bring her kids during the pandemic. "I was wondering where are all the parks in Lafayette," she says with a bright smile. "And now, it's here. We're

so excited to play."

Lagab's son, 3-year-old Adam, says he's excited about everything at the park, especially the airplane. Why? "Because I love to play and I love to fly."

More than four dozen people of all backgrounds and ages gathered to celebrate the reopening of Brook Street Park, which had been reduced to just tan bark after the broken down pirate-themed play equipment was removed just before the pandemic. Parents, residents, nannies, grandparents and children of all ages expressed how much they noticed the absence of a park during the long stint of sheltering in place most of last academic year.

Lauren Herpich, a member of the Parks, Trails and Rec Commission, says the arrival of a downtown park that is accessible to all ages, abilities and income levels has been a long time coming in the city of Lafayette.

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