

Sports MONDAY

Cal Poly Stuns Santa Barbara by Stealing Two Games

BY ELIAV APPELBAUM
Staff Writer

They came, they saw, they came within inches of their season goals.

With a possible Big West championship on the line, the UCSB baseball team came up virtually empty-handed against conference nemesis Cal Poly over the weekend for the final regular season games in the 2001 season at Caesar Uyesaka Stadium.

The Mustangs (30-26, 8-10 in the Big West) stunned the Gauchos (39-15, 12-6) in Friday's game by nipping the home team, 5-3. Santa Barbara returned to its outstanding consistent play Saturday, taking game two 9-1. Sunday culminated a tough weekend for UCSB and the squad's 10 departing seniors with the Gauchos' final ninth-inning rally falling literally inches short in a 3-2 defeat.

After the disappointing series results, UCSB Head Coach Bob Brontsema brought his squad together in left field telling his players that he was dismayed by the results, but pleased that everyone left everything on the field.

"I told them to hold their heads up," Brontsema said. "I think each and every guy gave it their all. They all did their best; sometimes, you don't get

the reward. That's the way baseball works."

The weekend wasn't a total wash, however. Sophomore right fielder Ryan Spilborghs extended his school-record hitting streak to 33 games, and senior southpaw Rylie Ogle joined junior ace James Garcia with 10 wins: Ogle and Garcia became the first Gaucha duo to finish one season with double digit wins. Senior second baseman Chad Peshke smacked his 58th double, a Big West and school record, in UCSB's lone win.

Garcia started game one against junior hurler Kevin Correia (6-1) and almost immediately struggled with his control.

In the top of the second Garcia walked senior outfielder Phil Thomson and hit sophomore shortstop Scott Anderson — this was the beginning of Garcia's demise as he went on to hit four batsmen and walked four over the course of 7.2 innings.

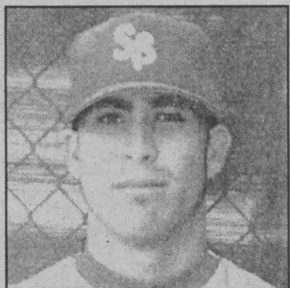
Spilborghs continued his hitting streak with a triple in the bottom of the second to drive in senior catcher Donovan Warrecker, who reached base on a walk.

UCSB lost the lead in the fifth, with Garcia plunking Anderson again. Senior infielder Kevin Tillman walked, loading the bases for a two-run single by Kyle Wilson.

Other highlights in the

first game included a two-run home run in the eighth from junior left fielder Jed Stringham, his 13th round-tripper of the year, to cut Cal Poly's lead 5-3.

The Gauchos returned



Ryan Spilborghs

to their dominating form in the second game. Ogle started the second game, which eerily started resembling the first game. Ogle (10-2) walked leadoff batter Scott Sheldon after Ogle marched ahead on a 1-2 count. Anderson then looped a single just inside the right foul line to put runners on first and third with no outs. Sheldon scored when Tillman reached first and Anderson was forced out at second.

Ogle settled down and focused to strike out Kyle Wilson and end the inning, and not allow another run in his six innings of work. Ogle gave up seven hits, one earned run, and struck out three batters.

"He's throwing quite a bit of pitches lately," UCSB Pitching Coach Tom Myers said. "He had

a tender arm midpoint of the season, and now he's more cognizant of his pitch counts. If we get the chance at the postseason, we want him to be healthy."

Santa Barbara raided the scoreboard in the second with three long-anticipated runs. Junior first baseman Tyler Von Schell ripped a stand-up double. Bannon sacrificed Von Schell to second. After Stringham popped out to short, Warrecker slapped a two-out single in the hole to tie the game.

Spilborghs fought for a single to move Warrecker to third and extend his hitting streak to 32 games. Warrecker and Spilborghs completed a double steal, with Warrecker sliding home to give the Gauchos a 2-1 lead. Leadoff sophomore center fielder Skip Schumaker drove in Spilborghs for the final run of the inning.

The fifth inning saw Spilborghs beat out an infield dribbler and nab his second stolen base before senior designated hitter Mike Kolbach drove him

in with a single in the middle.

Yet it was in the eighth inning where the Gauchos inflicted the most damage. After Stringham walked, Warrecker singled to put runners on the corners. Spilborghs was safe on a bunt single to load the bases for a sacrifice from Schumaker. Pinch-hitting sophomore Blair Havens blooped an RBI single scoring Warrecker. Peshke hit his record-breaking double to drive in two runners and finish the scoring on the afternoon.

Another notable performance on the evening came when junior middle-reliever Jeremy Sugarman came in and pitched two nearly flawless innings of relief. Sugarman, who got hit hard against UCLA last week, struck out two batters and maintained the tone that Ogle set with his fine performance.

"UCLA was just one of those games," Myers said. "It's the same guy pitching for us and a rough outing is not going to affect his confidence. He went in there and did his job."

The man Sugarman replaced did a fine job gleaning his tenth win of the season, as the only trouble Ogle had was allowing six of seven lead-off batters get on base.

"For some reason, I couldn't get the first guy out each inning," Ogle said. "They really didn't hit the ball hard, [but found a way to get on]."

Ogle was also pleased to be a part of Gaucha history.

"This tenth win [was huge and] I've been thinking about it for a while, so I'm glad to get it over with. And I'm happy to get a win that clinches second place for us."

On Senior Day, the Gauchos sent sophomore Jim Bullard to try to win the series and send the seniors home on a strong note. Yet Mustang senior Jared Blasdall pitched an amazing 8.1 innings of near flawless baseball against the potent UCSB lineup.

Spilborghs smacked a

See BASEBALL, p.3A

Performance Should Outweigh Appearances

BY MATT HEITNER

I was near the end of my journey home this past weekend, and considering the circumstances, I was in a pretty good mood. Up at 6 a.m., catch a bus to LAX, and then fly all day. And all just for my little brother's high-school graduation.

Sitting in the Phoenix airport, I noticed a lady reading the sports section of the *Arizona Republic*. Philadelphia's Allen Iverson was coming off his 52-point thrashing of the Raptors, so I expected a big story about his second 50-point game of the series. Sure enough, the story was there, detailing his abuse of Toronto.

But it was another article that caught my eye. It was a little inset in the main story, with the title, "Iverson Should Dress Part." Now, I almost knew what the author, Pedro Gomez, was going to say, but I went and bought the paper just so I could read the column anyway.

Reading the story, my worst fears were realized. Gomez complained that Iverson doesn't carry himself in the manner of an NBA Most Valuable Player — that he doesn't "look the part." But what really got to me was the reasoning Gomez had behind his argument. "Not once while winning any of his five MVP awards did Michael Jordan appear in anything less than a designer suit," Gomez wrote. "He looked the part."

Before I go any further, let's get one thing straight: Allen Iverson is no Michael Jordan. Just because Iverson has won a single MVP award and a couple of scoring titles does not mean that Iverson is the answer to His Airness. Let's wait until Iverson wins four more

MVP's, or perhaps a single NBA championship before we start making those comparisons.

After Gomez finished with the M.J. angle, he went on to another reason why Iverson should wear a suit and tie after the game, this one even more ridiculous than the first. Gomez argued, perhaps correctly, that Iverson is turning away NBA fans with his attire — NBA fans that are mostly white, middle- to upper-class males. But Gomez then went as far to suggest that Iverson should change his outfit to keep these fans from leaving the game. Can you imagine that — proposing that Iverson dress differently to please the NBA's white fans! Gomez argues that it would be for the good of the game and save the NBA's image, but who cares?

It's time to realize that this is no longer the NBA of M.J., Larry, and Magic. Long shorts have replaced the old time tighty-whities (unless your name is John Stockton), Showtime has been replaced by Shaq and Kobe, and the Celtics don't even play in the Garden anymore.

The NBA is now filled with young, brash talent not afraid to be themselves. And while their dress (and actions) off the court may be questionable, their performances on the court are not. Iverson and Vince Carter just staged a playoff duel evoking the memories of Jordan vs. Bird and Magic vs. Larry, but that doesn't mean we're back in the '80s. I know this may be hard for some to accept, but Larry and Magic are gone forever, as are the run 'n' gun days of the NBA. We're entering a new stage in the development of the NBA, and I think the league is looking just fine (Iverson included).

— Matt Heitner is the assistant sports editor of the Daily Nexus.



JASON SCHOCK / DAILY NEXUS

Senior second baseman Chad Peshke gets plunked in the back. Though UCSB settled for second place in the Big West, Peshke became the conference's all-time doubles leader.

The NBA Part I: Sixers Will Succeed

BY ELIAV APPELBAUM

I was wrong.

Picking the Minnesota Timberwolves to win the NBA championship was rash. Most of you reading this do not know who Doug West is, but he is the quintessential NBA swingman. He is the man who made me a Wolves fan, and he is largely ignored to this day.

For some reason, West and the Wolves meant something to me, and now even he is gone, but his presence and 19.3 points a game in the '92-93 season still stand out in my mind.

The Spurs. Choir Boys with long arms and long legs. Molasses can beat Spurs forward Samaki Walker in a race. Mr. Rogers has less etiquette than Mr. Robinson. A rubber duck has more personality than the inelastic Tim Duncan. This team can only win in a shortened season.

The Sixers haven't let me down yet. Center Dikembe Mutombo is beautiful — he convinced me that he is the preeminent defensive pinnacle in the NBA. My parents met Mutombo in a sports shop in Rockville, Maryland: They said he was the two-dimensional man. He was working out in his old neighborhood (he went

to school at Georgetown) during the off-season in 1995 when he was still an Atlanta Hawk.

Here are my final, semi-ambiguous predictions. Philly might win, but the Bucks still might win. The Lakers should win, but the Spurs could win. If Philly wins, and the Lakers win, then I think the Sixers will win, but you never know. If the Bucks and Spurs tangle, the Bucks should win, unless the Spurs do. If the Bucks and Lakers tango, then the Lakers will pound them (maybe). If Armageddon occurs before the Finals, then A.C. Green, the only 40-year-old virgin in the NBA, will get laid. Maybe, just maybe, John Starks will get his one nut back after all the shit Chicago took from him. Is he still a man?

To be honest with you, I like Philadelphia over Los Angeles in seven games *if* and only *if* Charles Barkley returns in full regalia as the "Round Mound of Rebound" and kicks Kobe's sorry punk-ass into the hardwood. Yeah, you heard it here first: Sex for A.C. Green, an extra nut for John Starks, an ass-whipping from Sir Charles and in the end a championship for the Philadelphia 76ers.

—Eliaiv Appelbaum is the Nexus' Sports Editor and thinks Michael Jordan bought off the NBA Lottery.

The NBA Part II: Los Angeles Prepares to Destroy Cheeseheads Unless God Comes

BY MATT HEITNER

It's down to the nitty-gritty.

With Milwaukee's game-seven thumping of the Hornets and Philly's dramatic game seven disposal of the Raptors, the NBA is down to its final four. And while most pundits will tell you that the championship is still up for grabs, I'm here to tell you different.

Barring any major injuries or an act of God, the Los Angeles Lakers will walk away in June with their second-straight NBA Title.

But before the Lake Show can add another banner to the rafters of the, uh, Staples Center, it must dispose of a seasoned San Antonio team. The Spurs come in with the best chance of dethroning L.A., but as the Lakers proved in their 104-90 game-one win, even the Twin Towers can't stop the Diesel and Kobe when they get going. Though Shaq and Kobe didn't exactly get along during the regular season, it appears that they have gelled just in time to blitz their way through the rest of the NBA.

Granted, it's still early in the series, but the game-one whipping demonstrated

the problems that the Lakers pose to every NBA team. If the opposition concentrates too much on Shaq, then it leaves Kobe open, and when that happens Bryant will burn you every time. And as if that's not enough, if L.A. happens to get flustered, all it has to do is turn to its coach, Phil Jackson. The "Zen Master" almost never loses his cool and knows what to do in almost every situation.

But what about the East? If the Spurs can't take out the Lakers, do you really think the 76ers or Bucks stand a chance? Both Eastern Conference teams are coming off a grueling seven-game series, meaning that no matter how long the Conference Finals go, the Lakers will be facing a tired team. And while it's tempting to choose the Sixers and MVP Allen Iverson to make it out of the East, I just don't see it happening. Milwaukee's Big Three is too talented, even for the Answer.

But once the Bucks make it to the Finals they will be in for a rude awakening. The Lakers are hungry for another title, and no Wisconsin basketball team is going to stop them.

—Matt Heitner was also wrong.

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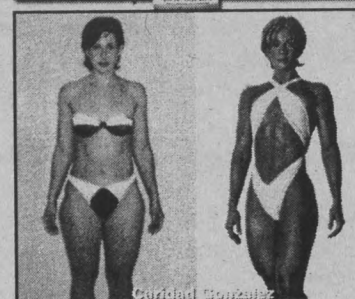
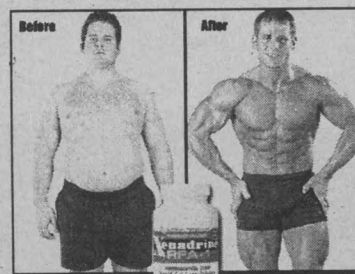
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JASON SCHOCK / DAILY NEXUS

Sophomore right fielder Ryan Spilborghs slides into first base trying to beat the throw after his sacrifice bunt. Though Spilborghs was out on this play, he continued his hitting streak, extending his school record to 33 consecutive games.

BASEBALL

Continued from p.1A

single in the sixth, and Schumaker moved him to second on a bunt sacrifice; Kolbach later drove Spilborghs in on a single.

After Cal Poly built a 3-1 lead heading into the bottom of the ninth, the Gauchos prepared for one more relay. Dave Molitor hit a stand-up double to begin the rally. Von Schell walked and Bannon hit a single in his last regular season at-bat to load the bases. Stringham sacrificed Molitor home, bringing up pinch-hitting Warreker to the plate with two outs. Warreker launched a hit that looked like it was going to drop in front of the right fielder, only to be caught by a diving Mustang Phil Thomson and end the game.

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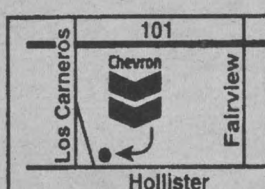
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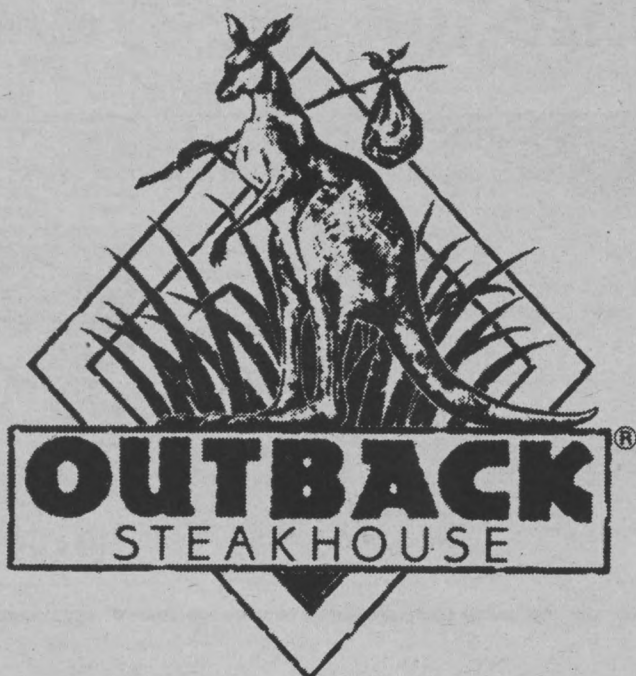
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