

Soccer Teams Prepare for Season with Scrimmages Against Cal State Dominguez Hills

August 21, 2006

In their first scrimmage, Cal State San Marcos' inaugural women's and men's soccer teams lost to Cal State Dominguez-Hills 2-0 and 3-2, respectively.

Though both teams were defeated in their match, they provided plenty of positives for the coaching staff to focus on. Head Coach Ron Pulvers was particularly impressed with the women's squad, who was only down 1-0 for most of the match, before giving up a goal in the 90th minute. The team showed worlds of potential in the loss, and Coach Pulvers believes that as the Cougar women continue to grow into the system and improve their

fitness, they'll start winning games like Sunday's.

"Physically, we matched up well with them," says Pulvers. "We're playing in a system that's unfamiliar to a lot of the girls right now. We will be very good."

The men's squad encountered a different set of problems, often looking mentally and physically overmatched against a very accomplished Dominguez-Hills team. Early confusion by the Cougars led to the first goal being let in only a few minutes into the match; but the team settled down, equalizing right before the half with a goal by defender and Notre Dame transfer Ben Crouse.

Dominguez Hills struck back in the second half, pushing the score to 3-1 before the Cougars' Miguel Jacobo tallied the final goal of the match. While the Cougar men appear to be more advanced in learning the system, Coach Pulvers was critical of his team in the loss.

"We weren't tough enough," states Pulvers. "Not enough players were willing to challenge and compete." Though the team needs to improve its effort, many individual players had strong matches. Pulvers named midfielder Chris Wyatt the Man of the Match for his outstanding play, and defenders Brian Luhrs, Jose Rivas, and Ben Crouse played very well, as did midfielders Chris Dunckel and Miguel Jacobo.

On the women's side, the entire back line of Tasha Stark, Alex Quindt, Jamie Beam, and Annica Perez were excellent, according to Pulvers. Co-captain Miquella Martinez had a solid game from her midfield position, and forwards Lucia Asbury, Randi Leyva, and Clarissa Hidalgo showed signs of being a very dangerous front line.

Both teams will participate in one more scrimmage before their seasons begin on August 22 at Cal Baptist. The first home games will take place on Friday, August 25, against Cal Poly Pomona. The games, to be held at Mangrum Track and Soccer Field, will mark the first ever intercollegiate sporting event held on-campus at CSUSM.

To get the soccer teams started on the right foot, a pep rally will be held that day in Founders' Plaza, right outside the library, to introduce the teams and coaching staff. The festivities start at noon, with the women's soccer match starting at 3:00 PM, and the men kicking off at 5:30 PM.

Soccer Teams Fall Just Short in Opener

August 31, 2006 Updated

In their first ever regular season games, both CSUSM's women's and men's soccer teams took Cal Baptist to overtime, but came up just short in the end.

The Cougar women held steady for all 90 regulation minutes, playing rock-solid defense against the 23rd-ranked Lancers. Despite being out-shot nearly 3-to-1, the Lady Cougars confused and frustrated the Lancers' offense for most of the game.

Locked in a scoreless tie heading into overtime, Cal Baptist finally broke through with a goal by Sarai Stamper. Alyssa Moore and Joanna Idom added tallies soon-after, making the final score a misleading 3-0.

Updated: The ruling as stated in a press release received, states: "In accordance with overtime procedures stated in the NCAA Rulebook, Rule 7, Section 1a., 'for regular season games, two sudden-victory overtime periods of 10 minutes each shall be played,' the officials should have ended the game when the first overtime goal was scored."

The Cougar men also dropped a tough match, losing 3-2 in overtime. Cal Baptist struck first, with Fashinu Ron-Nezbeth beating Cougar goalkeeper Trent Painter on a long shot in the 16th minute. CSUSM equalized early in the second half, as Notre Dame transfer Ben Crouse scored the first goal in the program's history on a 49th-minute header from a Troy Skomra throw-in.

After Cal Baptist re-took the lead on a Ruiz-Esparza goal, CSUSM's Bradley Seidenglanz took little time to tie it back up, scoring just three minutes later in the 78th minute. Early in overtime, however, the Lancers' Christian Diaz headed in the eventual game-winner.

Both the Cougar men's and women's teams are now 0-1 on the season. Coach Ron Pulvers was encouraged by the women's effort against a very good Cal Baptist team, though he recognizes that it will take a higher level of fitness to win matches like that. Pulvers was frustrated with the men, who were "not mentally prepared to compete."

Next on the schedule is a home match again Cal Poly Pomona - the first home intercollegiate sporting event in the history of Cal State San Marcos. Entry to the games is free, with the women kicking off at 3:00 PM and the men starting at 5:30.

Men's Soccer Triumphs in Thrilling Home Opener; Cougars Defeat CPP 2-1

August 26, 2006

A wild crowd of Cougar fans went home happy Friday, as the men's soccer team pulled out a last-second 2-1 win against the Cal Poly Pomona Broncos.

Freshman Chris Wyatt and his Cougar teammates made the most of their soccer home opener, defeating Cal Poly Pomona, 2-1. File photo

It was the first-ever home match for the men's team, and it did not disappoint. While the squad looked overmatched in its first game (a 3-2 loss to Cal Baptist), it was clear from the beginning that the Cougars were on the same level as Cal Poly, despite the Broncos having huge height advantage and former U.S. World Cup player Paul Caligiuri as head coach.

But CSUSM coach Ron Pulvers had his squad ready for the challenge. Throughout the game, Cal Poly tried to exploit its height advantage by playing long balls down the field; but the cagey Cougar defense held strong. Goalkeeper Trent Painter punched the ball out of the box in numerous potentially dangerous situations, and the team did a good job of limiting second-chance opportunities and counterattacking.

CSUSM had the best scoring chance of the first half, as midfielder Miguel Jacobo received a pass from the top of the box, made a nifty move, and hit a shot on-target that was knocked away by Broncos' keeper Thomas Ryan in the 45th minute.

With the game scoreless entering the second half, the Cougars turned up the intensity. Controlling the game in the 60th minute, they finally broke through and got on the scoreboard. Forward Michael Nuovo made an amazing run through the Bronco defense, getting into the box and leaving the ball off for Curtis Marcikic, who knocked it past the outstretched keeper to give the Cougars a 1-0 lead.

The Cougars came close to expanding the lead in the second half, as Nuovo continued to shred Cal Poly's defense and create chances for himself and his teammates. Despite plenty of close calls, the game was still 1-0 in the 85th minute, when Cal Poly finally beat the CSUSM defense. A ball was played into a large crowd in the box, and the Broncos' Andy Bertolucci poked it into the net; though it may have went off a Cougar player.

With just a few minutes remaining, overtime appeared imminent. However, Michael Nuovo had one more run left in him. In the final minute of the game, Miguel Jacobo cleared a ball downfield, and Nuovo outran the deepest Bronco defender, controlled the ball, and slipped it under the keeper. The Cougars dodged one last effort by the Broncos, holding on for a thrilling 2-1 victory.

Upon the final whistle, the crowd of University Village students rushed the field to celebrate with the Cougar team. The large and rowdy group had created a party atmosphere throughout the contest, starting chants ranging from the World Cup-style "Ole! Ole, ole, ole!" to synchronized Howard Dean screams. Many Cougar players commented on how blown away they were by the crowd, so hopefully the energy can continue for Cal State San Marcos' next home game, a match against Hope International at 5:30 PM on Monday.

Men's Soccer Wins Second Straight

August 29, 2006

In an impressive performance, the Cougar men posted a decisive 3-0 win on Monday against the Hope International Royals. It is the team's second-straight victory.

Dominating play from the opening kickoff, Cal State San Marcos (2-1) controlled possession, creating plenty of opportunities early and limiting Hope International's (0-1) chances. However, due to some near-misses and solid play by the opposing keeper, the teams went into the half tied at zero.

It wouldn't stay that way for long. Just four minutes into the second half, Cougar defender Troy Skomra played a beautiful ball into the box. Forward Curtis Marcikic freed himself from the defense and headed it past the keeper into an open corner of the net. It was Marcikic's second goal of the season.

Just a few minutes later, the Cougars struck again, this time thanks to midfielder Bradley Seidenglanz. Seidenglanz managed to slip through the Royals defense, and fellow midfielder Chris Wyatt spotted him and slipped him the ball through traffic. Seidenglanz finished the play, giving the Cougars a two score cushion. They would tack on one more in the 87th minute when Jaime Martinez drew a foul in the box, and Demitri Hidalgo subsequently knocked the penalty kick home.

The 3-0 win comes on the heels of a thrilling 2-1 victory against Cal Poly Pomona in the team's home opener. In both those games, CSUSM enjoyed a significant home-field advantage thanks to a very loud core group of fans.

The squad's next contest is an away match against San Diego Christian College on September 7th. Two days later, the Cougars will be back at home taking on Pomona Pitzer at 1:00 PM.

The team is clearly benefiting from the fans' support, so come out to Mangrum Track and Soccer Field on Saturday, September 9th to support your Cougars!

Cougars Pound S.D. Christian 7-0; Men's Soccer Team Wins in Big Way

September 7, 2006

The CSUSM Cougar men continued to shine on Thursday, blowing away the San Diego Christian Hawks by a score of 7-0.

It didn't take long for the Cougars to take control of the game. Just nine minutes in, midfielder Troy Skomra spotted forward Michael Nuovo making a run, slipped him the ball behind the defense, and Nuovo slammed it home to give the Cougars a 1-0 lead. Four minutes later, Miguel Jacobo headed in a feed from Bobby Miles, increasing the lead to 2-0.

Just one minute afterwards, the Hawks' Miguel Franco fouled Nuovo in the box. Franco was red carded, and Nuovo converted the penalty kick for his second goal of the game. In the 18th minute, Ben Crouse continued the early onslaught by heading in a Jose Rivas corner kick, making the score 4-0.

CSUSM didn't slow down much in the second half. In the 48th minute, Jose Rivas delivered another excellent corner kick, which was headed in this time by Chris Wyatt. Brian Luhrs made the score 6-0 in the 68th minute when Rivas knocked a free kick to Ben Crouse, who slipped it through to Luhrs for the finish.

Finally, in the 77th minute subs Ivan Milosevski and Brent Zuniga combined for the last goal, with Zuniga getting behind the defense for a walk-in goal and a 7-0 final score.

Now 3-1 on the year, the Cougars are playing with confidence and poise - something that would have been difficult to imagine after the squad's loss in its opening match. However, Coach Ron Pulvers and his staff has the team playing fantastic soccer, despite being only four games into its first season.

They won't have long to dwell on this victory, however; the team's next game is a home match against Pomona Pitzer on Saturday.

All CSUSM fans are welcome to head down to Mangrum Track and Soccer field for the 1:00 PM game and cheer on their Cougars!

CSUSM Men Win Overtime Thriller Over Pomona Pitzer

September 9, 2006

It took 108 of a possible 110 minutes, but the persistence of the Cougar men's soccer team finally paid off, as the squad earned a 1-0 win over Pomona Pitzer on Saturday.

From the opening whistle, the match was physical and hard-fought. Cal State San Marcos took control of the early play, generating a few quality scoring opportunities. In the fifth minute, midfielder Miguel Jacobo played a ball to forward Michael Nuovo, whose shot was deflected to midfielder Bradley Seidenglanz. With the keeper out of position, Seidenglanz put his shot on target, but the Pomona defense prevented it from reaching the goal. Both teams struggled with completing their runs for the rest of the half, and legitimate scoring opportunities were few and far between.

Despite the fans' best effort to energize the Cougars, the pace of the first half carried over into the second. The Cougars nearly broke through in the 86th minute, with Troy Skomra controlling a loose ball in the box and rocketing it off the crossbar. Defender Ben Crouse was able to get to the rebound, but headed it just over the net.

Heading into overtime, the game remained a scoreless tie. Pomona saw a few chances in overtime, nearly converting on a loose ball in front of the net, as well as a shot that was stopped by Cougar keeper Trent Painter.

With just two minutes to go, CSUSM earned a throw-in deep on Pomona's side of the field. Troy Skomra launched his throw deep into the box, where Ben Crouse won the ball, and alertly slipped a pass to Bradley Seidenglanz on the far side of the box. Seidenglanz knocked the one-time shot past the keeper, winning the game for the Cougars.

This makes four wins in a row for the Cougar men, who are an impressive 4-1 in their first season. Their next home game is against Point Loma Nazarene on September 16th at 1:00 PM, so come out and support the squad!

Men's Soccer Continues Winning Ways; Defeats Cal Tech

September 11, 2006

The men's soccer team continued its roll on Sunday, going on the road to defeat Cal Tech 5-1. The victory pushes the Cougars' win streak to five games.

Sunday's decisive win is quickly becoming business-as-usual for the men's soccer team, which is in just its first year of competition. Coach Ron Pulvers saw his squad get off to a quick start against Cal Tech, scoring all five of its goals in the first half. Defender and Notre Dame transfer Ben Crouse began the scoring in the 9th minute with a well-placed header into the upper right corner of the net. The goal was Crouse's third on the year, all of which have come on headers.

That was just the beginning of the Cougars' scoring. Two minutes later, forward Curtis Marcikic sent a cross to Bradley Seidenglanz, who slipped it past the Cal Tech keeper. In the 18th minute, Marcikic himself made it 3-0, knocking a header into the corner of the net. Soon after, forward Michael Nuovo, who leads the Cougars with four goals, broke free from the defense, creating space for him to hit a rocket past the keeper.

Cal Tech was able to get on the board in the 23rd minute, when Vezdan Badlakhan struck a perfectly placed free kick past CSUSM keeper Trent Painter. That would be all that Painter would let by, however. The Cougar keeper has only allowed two goals during CSUSM's five-game win streak.

CSUSM would cap off the scoring when defender Brian Luhrs fed Ivan Milosevski, who had recently been subbed in, and Milosevski knocked his shot into the back of the net. After a conservatively-played second half, the 5-1 score became final, and the Cougars returned home with their momentum and win streak still intact.

They won't have long to rest, however; the team has to go on the road again on Thursday, this time to face the University of La Verne. The squad's next home match will be against Point Loma Nazarene on Saturday the 16th at 1:00 PM.

Men's Soccer Shuts Out U. of La Verne

September 14, 2006

The CSUSM men's soccer team pushed its winning streak to six games on Thursday, shutting out the University of La Verne 3-0. The team's overall record is now 6-1.

A strong effort by the entire roster made the difference. Forward Curtis Marcikic gave the Cougars an early lead in the 15th minute, when midfielder Bradley Seidenglanz played a cross to him in the box. Marcikic struck a one-time shot out of the air, beating La Verne's keeper and giving CSUSM a 1-0 lead.

That score would persist for the majority of the hard-fought match. In the 79th minute, however, the Cougars got some insurance, thanks to freshman Joey Hill. Chris Wyatt struck a corner kick into a crowd in front of the net, and the resulting loose ball was controlled by Hill and hammered home. It was Hill's first goal on the season.

Another Cougar tallying his first goal, Daniel Vasquez, capped off the scoring in the 85th minute. Curtis Marcikic made a run down the left side of the field, striking a cross that found Vasquez's foot. As the shot hit the back of the net, CSUSM was assured of its sixth straight win.

Cougar goalkeeper Trent Painter posted yet another clean sheet, his fourth on the season. In seven games this year, Painter has only allowed five shots past him. Tonight's full team effort speaks to the surprising depth of CSUSM's roster. Even when star scorer Michael Nuovo doesn't figure in the scoring, the squad can still win comfortably - certainly a positive sign.

The Cougars will return home to play Point Loma Nazarene on Saturday (9/19) at 1:00 PM. All CSUSM fans are welcome to head down to Mangrum Track and Soccer Field to cheer on their Cougars!

Men's Soccer Upsets #25 Point Loma Nazarene

Program's first win against a nationally ranked team

September 16, 2006

If the CSUSM men's soccer team was still under the radar after a 6-1 start, it won't be much longer.

That's because the Cougars defeated #25 Point Loma Nazarene 1-0 on Saturday. It is the program's first ever victory against an opponent that is nationally ranked by the NAIA.

The game was physical and hard-fought from start-to-finish. Control of play switched back-and-forth between the two sides, though legitimate scoring opportunities were few and far between. Bradley Seidenglanz was very active early for the Cougars, nearly scoring on a breakaway opportunity in the early game. However, Point Loma keeper Bryan Louzil was up for the challenge, getting a hand on the shot and deflecting it out of bounds.

Seidenglanz would have his revenge. In the 30th minute, the Cougars earned a throw-in deep in Point Loma territory. Troy Skomra launched it into the box, where Brian Luhrs controlled the ball. Luhrs adeptly slipped a pass across the box, connecting with Seidenglanz, who tapped it into the open corner of the net.

Up 1-0 with 60 minutes left to play, the task for the Cougars was just to hold on. Coach Ron Pulvers switched to a strategy based on counterattacking in the second half, which resulted in more opportunities for the Cougars.

After some near misses, disaster struck in the 67th minute. Following a hard foul by Point Loma, Troy Skomra threw a ball at a Point Loma player. A brief skirmish followed, but both teams' coaches quickly broke it up. However, Skomra was red-carded, leaving the Cougars a man down for the remainder of the match.

With its newfound advantage, Point Loma pushed hard to equalize the score. However, the San Marcos defenders, led by senior Ben Crouse, held strong; and goalkeeper Trent Painter did not let anything past. Though he was only called on to make two saves, Painter's decision making was excellent as usual en route to his fifth shutout of the year.

As the final whistle sounded, the Cougars celebrated, knowing they had earned their most impressive win of the season thus far. They won't have long to savor the victory, though - they'll be back on Mangrum Field this Tuesday (9/19) against Vanguard University. Any and all CSUSM fans are welcome to attend the 4:00 PM game and cheer on their 7-1 Cougars!

Men's Soccer's Win Streak Snapped in Overtime

September 19, 2006

It took 97 hard-fought minutes of soccer, but the CSUSM men's team (7-2) saw its win streak come to an end on Tuesday at the hands of visiting Vanguard University (6-1) by a score of 2-1.

Prior to Tuesday's game, the men had won 7-straight matches, including a victory over then-#25 Point Loma Nazarene. But Vanguard proved the toughest test to-date, and the Cougars came up just short in overtime.

In what was an extremely physical match from the opening whistle, both teams battled to a 0-0 first half. Though scoreless, the half was anything but uneventful. After roughly 15 minutes of back-and-forth play, the Cougars made a hard push to score, and nearly did. Their effort culminated in a 22nd-minute penalty kick by forward Mike Nuovo. Nuovo struck the shot hard, but Vanguard keeper William Johnson was up for the task, blocking the ball from getting past him. The rebound went to Curtis Marcikic, who rocketed it off the crossbar. Off the ensuing corner-kick, the Cougars would hit the post once again, capping off what was an intense but ultimately frustrating surge.

While the first half saw one penalty kick, the second half would see two more. The first chance was earned by CSUSM in the 60th minute. Chris Wyatt was selected to take the shot, and he finally beat the Vanguard keeper to break the scoreless tie. Unfortunately for the Cougars, 15 minutes later Vanguard earned a penalty kick of their own, and Christopher Leiva was able to slip it past keeper Trent Painter.

Deadlocked at 1-1, both teams continued to trade chances for the rest of regulation. The game went to overtime, where in the 97th minute Vanguard was able to break the tie. Keeper William Johnson hit a ball hard downfield, finding Dane Gallion, who had slipped past CSUSM's defense. Gallion controlled the ball and made a run across the box. Keeper Trent Painter tried to cut down his angle, but Gallion beat him to the corner and was able to tuck his shot into the back of the net to give Vanguard the 2-1 victory.

Though the loss is a tough pill to swallow for the Cougar men and their loyal (and rowdy) fans, the team is still 7-2 on the season, and has proved that they can compete with just about anybody. They'll try to bounce back in a road game at Biola University on Friday. Their next home game will take place on Sunday, October 1st, at 3:00 PM against La Sierra University.

Men's Soccer Back on Winning Track; Defeats Biola 1-0

September 22, 2008

Coming off its first loss since its opening match, the Cal State San Marcos men's soccer team (8-2) quickly righted the ship on Friday, defeating a previously unbeaten Biola squad (4-1) by a score of 1-0 in what was a tremendous soccer game.

Scoring opportunities were few and far between in the tightly contested match. Luckily for CSUSM, Curtis Marcikic got the Cougars on the board early. Just under 6 minutes into the match, Chris Wyatt controlled a ball in Biola territory. From a sharp angle, he struck a cross to the opposite side of the net, finding Marcikic all alone at the far post. Though the cross handcuffed him, Marcikic managed to redirect the ball into the net with his hip, giving CSUSM an unlikely 1-0 lead

That would be all the Cougars' defense would need. After Marcikic's goal, CSUSM managed only one more shot on goal for the duration of the match, but was able to fend off all of Biola's attacks. Cougar keeper Trent Painter was his usual self, barking out instructions to his defenders, making good decisions, and stopping both shots on goal he faced.

In the waning minutes of the match, Biola mounted a ferocious charge, nearly equalizing the game multiple times with some hard shots and free kicks that just missed. But despite all this, CSUSM never lost its composure, weathering the storm until the final whistle blew.

For the Cougars, Friday's win should be a major confidence builder. The squad was coming off a tough loss, playing on the road, and involved in one of its first night games in cold and windy conditions, yet still managed to best a very good Biola team that entered the game 4-0. Following the game, assistant coach Bobby Renneisen had nothing but praise for both teams.

"This was the best team we've faced all year," says Renneisen. "It was just a great college soccer game. It could have gone either way."

Renneisen added that Biola has 4 or 5 players with "special" talent. All of this makes the Cougars' performance on Friday even more impressive, and bodes very well for the team's outlook for the rest of the season.

After a well-deserved week off, the Cougar men will be in action again when they host a very tough La Sierra squad on Sunday, October 1st. Kickoff is at 3:00 PM, and all CSUSM supporters are welcome to head down to Mangrum Field to cheer on your Cougars!

Resounding 4-0 Victory over La Sierra for Men's Soccer

October 1, 2006

Coming off an emotional 1-0 win at Biola, the Cougar men won in much less thrilling but equally effective fashion on Sunday, coasting to a 4-0 home victory over La Sierra.

From the opening kickoff, it was clear that CSUSM (9-2) had the upper hand. The Cougars controlled play throughout the first half, connecting on passes to create scoring opportunities and shutting down La Sierra's offense entirely.

The Cougars' back line was impenetrable, with fullbacks Brian Luhrs and Chris Dunckel playing especially strong defensive games. La Sierra could not generate any kind of sustained attack on Cougar keeper Trent Painter; who, with the help of the strong defense, earned his sixth shutout of the season.

On offense, CSUSM was no slouch either. Midfielder Miguel Jacobo tallied the first goal of the match mid-way through the first half. After a couple near misses, Chris Wyatt spotted Jacobo making a run behind the defense, and slipped him a pass. Jacobo tucked the ball into the far corner, making the score 1-0, which would hold up through rest of the first half.

In the 60th minute, the Cougars would expand their lead. Forward Curtis Marcikic worked his way into the box, and hit a well-struck cross to the other side, where he found the foot of Daniel Vasquez. Vasquez finished with a nifty one-timed shot, beating the keeper and increasing the lead to 2-0.

It would be 3-0 not long after. Demitri Hidalgo forced a turnover just outside the left side of the box in La Sierra territory. Hidalgo hit a rocket shot across the box that curled past the keeper and into the corner of the net. Assistant Coach Bobby Renneisen called it one of the prettiest goals scored by the team this season.

Ben Crouse capped off the scoring late in the game. The defender made his way into the box, where Demitri Hidalgo found him. Realizing he had space, Crouse was able to turn and strike the ball hard into the corner of the net.

The 4-0 score would hold up for the Cougars' ninth win in eleven tries this season. The team appears to have rebounded stronger than ever from its last loss, a 2-1 heartbreaker against Vanguard University two weeks ago, as evidenced by its wins over Biola and now La Sierra. The team will carry its momentum into three straight road games, the first being on October 7th at UC Santa Cruz.

Despite Nuovo's Hat Trick, Men's Soccer Loses to Santa Cruz

October 7, 2006

In a tightly contested game with the #12 team in NCAA Division III, the Cougar men gave a strong effort and got one great individual performance, but fell just short, losing to U.C. Santa Cruz 4-3 on Saturday.

One week after Courtney Drummond recorded the first ever hat trick in CSUSM's history, Mike Nuovo became the first member of the men's team to perform the feat. Nuovo found the back of the net three times, and each of his goals tied the game or gave the Cougars the lead. It was a terrific individual performance to say the least, and Nuovo now leads the Cougars with 7 goals on the season.

In the first ten minutes, the Cougars were absolutely on fire, and had a chance to bury Santa Cruz early. They generated three breakaway opportunities and hit the post twice. Mike Nuovo was able to convert one of the chances when Curtis Marcikic hit a shot across the net and Nuovo tipped it in; but when the dust settled, CSUSM found itself up only 1-0.

Nuovo's second goal came on a long throw-in. The ball bounced a couple times before finding him at the top of the box. Nuovo struck a volley perfectly, hitting an absolute rocket that the keeper had no chance to stop from reaching the upper corner of the net.

The hat trick was completed with five minutes left to play. Bradley Seidenglanz took a free kick in the offensive zone, and found Nuovo behind the defense for a tap-in. At that point, it looked as if the Cougars would be able to hold on for a draw.

But on Saturday, it wasn't enough to defeat a very strong U.C. Santa Cruz squad. Unlike the Cougars, Santa Cruz's goals came from three different sources. Harry Abraham, Matt Skenazy and Steve Wondolowski all found the back of the net, with Abraham notching a second with just two minutes to go, which proved to be the game winner.

It was an uncharacteristically rough match for the Cougar defense, which has been terrific for nearly all of this season up to this point. Keeper Trent Painter did not have his best match either. Many of Santa Cruz's chances came due to defensive miscues, including the game winner, which was a result of a total defensive breakdown.

Still, there were some bright spots, especially with regards to the offense. Aside from Mike Nuovo's obviously-great performance, Bradley Seidenglanz played a very strong game, as well as the midfielders as a group, especially Chris Wyatt. Bobby Miles came in off the bench and played great soccer, proving to Coach Ron Pulvers that he's ready to handle more playing time.

In what was a very physical match, the Cougars suffered some key injuries. Defender Brian Luhrs and midfielder Chris Duncel both had to leave the game, and their playing status for the remainder of the season is uncertain.

The Cougars won't have long to lick their wounds; they'll stay in Santa Cruz Saturday night, and play a game against Menlo College on Sunday before returning home.

Seidenglanz's Performance Helps Men's Soccer Bounce Back With 7-3 Win Over Menlo

October 8, 2006

It didn't take the Cougar men (10-3-0) long to recover from their third loss of the year. One day after losing a close game to U.C. Santa Cruz, the Cougars came back to defeat Menlo College 7-3 on the strength of Bradley Seidenglanz's fantastic day.

Seidenglanz, who dropped to second on the Cougars in scoring after teammate Michael Nuovo recorded three goals yesterday, took back the team scoring lead with a hat trick of his own on Sunday. If that wasn't enough, Seidenglanz also assisted on the Cougars' final three goals of the match, pushing his total points for the game to 9, a CSUSM record. He now has 8 goals and 4 assists on the season.

But it was a team effort that got the job done against Menlo (2-8-0). After falling behind in the 10th minute, the Cougars roared back. In the 19th minute, Seidenglanz got his first goal when he buried a shot off a pass that Chris Wyatt had slipped him behind the defense. Soon after, Seidenglanz recorded his second goal by tapping in the rebound off a Ben Crouse shot.

When Menlo's Cameron Lawrence was able to equalize a minute later, it seemed like the match would remain close throughout.

The Cougars, however, had other ideas. In the 39th minute, Brian Luhrs headed in a well-placed Chris Wyatt free kick for his second goal of the season. With the score 3-2 at the start of the second half, Cougar midfielder Troy Skomra received his second yellow card, and was sent off.

Though they were now a man down, the Cougars' stepped up their game considerably after the ejection. With more open space on the field, the offense, specifically Seidenglanz, had more room to work, and things began opening up.

Seidenglanz's third goal came when Bobby Miles played a ball into him in the box. Working his way through the defense, Seidenglanz made his way across the top of the box, and blasted a shot past the keeper to the far post.

Having scored three goals, Seidenglanz proceeded to set up his teammates for three more. First, he slid a pass to set up Daniel Vasquez on a breakaway. Then he made an unbelievable cross that found Miguel Jacobo on the far post for a tap-in. Finally, after Menlo's Julian Baldaccini got his second goal to make the score 6-3, Seidenglanz drilled a free kick off the post, and the rebound was cleaned up by Joey Hill.

Overall, Coach Ron Pulvers was blown away by Seidenglanz's game.

"It was one of the best individual performances by any athlete I've ever coached," said Pulvers. "I've never had any flank player produce in a game like Bradley did. He was on a totally different level." Though the story of the game was Seidenglanz, Demitri Hidalgo quietly sparked the team's late surge. Coming off the bench soon after Skomra was sent off, Hidalgo's crisp passing and high effort energized the team, and changed the complexion of the game.

In the end, the 7-3 score would hold up, getting the men's team back on the winning track. The squad will take the field at La Sierra on October 18th before heading home on October 20th to face Chapman University at 4:00 PM.

Men's Soccer Posts Convincing 6-0 Win Over La Sierra; Defense Back on Track

October 18, 2006

Mike Nuovo's two goals propelled the Cougar men's soccer team (11-3) to a convincing 6-0 win at La Sierra University on Wednesday. Earlier this month, CSUSM defeated La Sierra by a score of 4-0.

Almost as important than the win itself was the fact that the squad's defense regained its form. In its first eleven games, the Cougars limited opponents to just seven goals. But in a weekend road trip against U.C. Santa Cruz and Menlo, the defense faltered, allowing seven goals in just the two games.

Wednesday's match was the first since those games, and the defense bounced back better than ever, as did keeper Trent Painter. The offense was awfully good too, with forwards Curtis Marcikic and Mike Nuovo playing dynamic games. The Cougars controlled every phase of the match, out-shooting La Sierra by a staggering total of 29-3, and earning ten corner kicks to their opponent's zero.

The Cougar scoring came early and often. Off the opening kickoff, Curtis Marcikic split the defense for a one-on-one with the keeper, but was unable to convert. At the one-minute mark, Miguel Jacobo penetrated the defense, and struck a cross in front of the goal. A La Sierra defender tried to head it aside, but redirected it into his net for an own goal.

But the Cougars wouldn't need that kind of luck on Wednesday. In the 11th minute, Curtis Marcikic slid a pass to Mike Nuovo behind the defense, and Nuovo was able to slip it under the keeper. Just two minutes later, the same duo teamed up for another goal, with Marcikic once again finding Nuovo behind the defense.

Three minutes after that, the Cougars earned a free kick in La Sierra territory. Chris Wyatt surprised his opponents by taking the kick quickly, and finding defender Ben Crouse making a run. Crouse was able to tuck his shot into the bottom corner of the net.

At the 43-minute mark, CSUSM would push its lead to 5-0. Miguel Jacobo hit a cross that found Brandon Zuniga, who made a nifty redirection towards the goal. The keeper would make the save, but Daniel Vasquez was there to clean up the rebound.

The scoring was capped off in the 70th minute when Bradley Seidenglanz collected a loose ball, made a run through the defense, and beat the keeper. The 7-0 final score matches the squad's biggest margin of victory, which came in the September 7th win over San Diego Christian College.

Next up for the Cougars is a home game against Chapman University on Friday, October 20th. All fans are welcome to head down to Mangrum Field to cheer on their Cougars in the last home match of their inaugural season! Kickoff is at 4:00 PM, with the women's team playing at 2:00 PM.

Disappointing 1-1 Tie for Men's Soccer Against Chapman

October 20, 2006

In an effort that can only be described as flat, the Cougar men (11-3-1) stumbled to a 1-1 tie against Chapman University in front of a raucous CSUSM crowd on Friday.

From the opening kickoff, the Cougars did not appear to have the 'magic' that they've possessed throughout their inaugural season. The team looked a little sluggish, and had trouble both connecting on passes in the offensive zone and finishing when opportunities presented themselves. While the Cougars still managed to control play, out-shooting Chapman 21-8, they were never able to put their opponent away.

In fact, Chapman got on the board first. In the 10th minute, their offense broke through, with Chris Marshall making a run down the middle of the Cougar defense. Marshall flipped a beautiful pass to teammate Paul Hirshman, who hit a solid shot past helpless Cougar keeper Trent Painter.

Down 1-0 for most of the first half, Coach Ron Pulvers subbed out both his starting forwards, Mike Nuovo and Curtis Marcikic, late in the half. Demitri Hidalgo, who came in as a result of those moves, provided the Cougars with the spark they needed. After a couple of close calls, the Cougars were finally able to equalize the score when Bradley Seidenglanz was able to find Hidalgo standing in the box. Seidenglanz slipped him the pass, and Hidalgo turned and fired it at the net, beating the keeper to the corner.

Unfortunately, the team could not build on that, instead allowing Chapman to regain the momentum. With the score still deadlocked in the 70th minute, Chapman's Chris Marshall was brought down in the box, and the ref awarded a penalty kick. With the game hanging in the balance, the CSUSM crowd came to the team's rescue. As Marshall was setting up for his kick, the crowd began a very loud and unified chant of "Marshall...Marshall...Marshall," reminiscent of the "Darryl" chants directed at outfielder Darryl Strawberry in the 80's. Much to the crowd's delight, the penalty kick sailed harmlessly over the net.

The 1-1 tie persisted through regulation, and despite both teams' best efforts, was not broken in overtime. The Cougars had plenty of chances in extra time, but just could not put a shot on goal. With darkness falling, the second overtime ended; and the Cougars, who have played with such great emotion all season, were left with a head-scratching result.

With just one game left in the season, it's unclear whether the Cougars will make the regional playoffs. Regardless, the season can only be considered a major success, given that this is the first year of the program. The squad's final game will be on October 23rd at Whittier College.

Men's Soccer Finishes Season With 4-1 Win

October 23, 2006

On Monday, the CSUSM men's soccer team capped off what has been an extremely successful first season with a comfortable 4-1 victory at Whittier College.

Though the result was good, for the second straight game the squad appeared to be sleepwalking at times, failing to generate the kind of intensity it had earlier in the season. It is unclear whether they'll have a chance to reverse that trend this fall - whether or not the Cougars (12-3-1) make the regional playoffs will be revealed this Sunday.

In Monday's game, the Cougars controlled play from start to finish against Whittier, who is winless on the year. Chris Wyatt got the Cougars off to an early lead. In the 15th minute, Wyatt gathered a loose ball at the top of the box, and drove a low hard shot past the keeper.

Whittier answered soon after, equalizing the score off a corner kick. The game remained 1-1 for a good portion of the first half; but the Cougars would eventually prove too much, scoring twice more before halftime.

Fan-favorite Daniel Vasquez notched the Cougars' second goal, getting in behind the defense and tucking his shot into the corner of the net. A few minutes later, Miguel Jacobo hit a long pass that connected with Bradley Seidenglanz, who was left 1-on-1 with the keeper. Seidenglanz slipped the ball under the keeper and into the net, finishing the opportunity as he has throughout the season.

The second half saw more of the same, and while the Cougars only scored one goal, their play was generally sounder than in the first 45 minutes. With the game well in hand in the 89th minute, Curtis Marcikic finished the match off when he volleyed a shot past the keeper.

While by no means the Cougars' most impressive win, Coach Ron Pulvers and his staff will take it if it's what gets the squad into the playoffs. But if not, then the team can still be quite proud of what they've accomplished in just the first year of the program, and the fans can expect even more excitement next fall!