

Bears Big Over Wildcats

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BERKELEY - California recorded 13 tries, six by sophomore wing Andrew Battaglia, as the Golden Bears moved to 13-0 overall and 3-0 in PAC Rugby Conference with their 80-14 win over Arizona Saturday on Witter Rugby Field.

The Wildcats got tries from Trevor Jenson in the 57th minute and Cameron Hudson in the 80th minute, both converted by Joe Kunz. Kunz also attempted a penalty kick that was wide left in the 51st minute as Arizona fell to 3-3 overall and 0-2 in the conference.

"Even when we had possession, we were on our heels," said Arizona head coach Dave Sitton. "Cal is a very disciplined team. But we didn't really manage ourselves very well either. We had seven kicking errors today and every one of them led to a try."

Battaglia unsurprisingly steered credit to his teammates for his career-high scoring line and called the first of two tries by scrumhalf Nicklas Boyer, in the 14th minute, his favorite piece of play in which he had a hand. Boyer also kicked 2-of-5 conversions after relieving fullback Jake Anderson, whose 3-for-8 conversion rate reflected the frequency of tries in the corners.

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Try-scoring junior lock Patrick Coleman said, "The forwards played well but we can't let off the gas," partly in reference to allowing an Arizona try in the final minute of play. And while it was a team effort to produce the pressure that allowed nine different Rugby Bears to notch points on Saturday, the concern was for second-half replacement Paul Bosco, who went down in the 73rd with a serious leg injury that necessitated his transport to a hospital.

"I'm disappointed for our team but I'm really disappointed for Paul," said Cal head coach Jack Clark. "He will be hard to replace, as he brings a lot to our team. He's the best halfback in college rugby so it would be disingenuous not to acknowledge his injury for what it is, a big blow."

Captain Seamus Kelly added, "Paul has a handle on the game and his skills are second to none. We'll definitely miss him and at the same time we have full confidence in our guys to work hard to fill any void." Reflecting on the match, Kelly said, "Our shape looks good but we're still not executing the way we want to be. We're still not hitting on all cylinders. This is a challenging week for us and we'll be looking for ways to improve on Monday night against Penn State."

In other PAC Rugby action on Saturday, UCLA came back from a 12-7 halftime deficit to beat Oregon State, 35-12, in Corvallis, and Utah defeated Arizona State, 36-11, in Salt Lake City.

The Cal reserves also beat Arizona on Saturday by the score of 114-0.

Two night games comprise the remainder of the Bears' current three-match homestand. A rare edition of "Monday Night Rugby" takes place under the lights on March 4 at 6 p.m. against an even rarer regular-season opponent in the Nittany Lions. Two nights later, Cal will host James Madison University in the first-ever meeting between the two squads in another 6 p.m. night game Wednesday, March 6, on Witter Rugby Field.

Next Saturday, the Bears resume their PAC Rugby Conference at Oregon State.