



Santa Ana Men's Soccer 2024 Recap

Articles and photos from the Dons' conference games

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SCORE Forward Paul Carrillo netted his sixth goal of the season on Nov. 1.

Dons stung by Hornets in home conference opener

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Santa Ana College lost their first conference home game in a tense match on Tuesday, 2-0 with Fullerton scoring the second goal in the final minutes.

The game went back and forth until the Hornets scored the first goal within the first two minutes of the second half.

SAC continued to pressure the Hornets, who continued to take shots on goal. Despite their best efforts to tie the game, Fullerton scored the second goal of the game in the final minutes.

"I think we were a little flat today, we didn't start like how we normally started the last couple of games," said Coach Jose Vasquez

The Fullerton bench celebrated with a chant "Dale

Dale Fullerton" as they kept the energy up for their team and put pressure on the Dons.

"We could have done better by scoring a couple of goals," said Defender Elijah Lozano.

The Dons fought till the end to look to tie the game and win it but it wasn't their night. The Dons put pressure on the Hornets going for shots to the goal and winning fouls, the Hornet's defenders secured their goal without conceding at all.

The Dons will look to bounce back to winning ways in their next home game against Santiago Canyon College on Friday, Oct. 25.



The Dons take down the Hawks

PUBLISHED OCTOBER 30, 2024

The Dons are back to winning ways after a dominating game on Friday where they scored four goals in the first half to eventually beat the Hawks 6-0.

After losing two straight games and tying one, Santa Ana College easily beat sister school Santiago Canyon College with substituting bench players. SAC, which is now 5-2-2, kept control of the entire game only allowing only three shots on goal.

“We wanted to start the second half of the season strong and send a message to ourselves, that we have to do better moving forward and win the next six games if we want to make the playoffs,” said Coach Jose Vasquez.

SAC had control of the first half of the game with midfielder Nicolas Linares opening the score in the first 15 minutes. Substitute forward Alejandro Oropeza scored two goals in his first four minutes on the

field. The fourth goal came through a penalty kick scored by midfielder Bryant Pineda in minute 38.

The Dons slowed down the beating in the second half of the game, only managing to score twice despite having ten shots on goal. Bench players scored the last two goals to finish off the Hawks.

“We needed the confidence coming into the second half of the season. The first half of the season was bumpy but we are trying to change that,” said Forward Alejandro Oropeza

It was a must-win game to stay on top of the Orange Empire Conference table. As the Dons start the second half of the season, the team is looking to stay on the winning side in the last six remaining games of the season.

The Dons will take on the Orange Coast College Pirates at home on Friday, Nov. 1.



Dons sink Pirates

PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 23, 2024

The Dons kept their winning streak going after a tough win on Friday against the Pirates. There were seven goals totaled throughout the game, where SAC beat OCC with a score of 4-3.

The second half of the season has started well for the Dons, who are on a three-game winning streak.

After beating OCC away, SAC knew the game was going to be a win. However, the Dons struggled to win at home.

The Dons took the lead in the first twenty minutes of the first half with top goal scorer Paul Carillo with a header goal. SAC ended the first half leading the game 1-0.

The Pirates put pressure on the Dons and tied the game in the minute 70th with a goal from forward Gabriel Gracia. Minutes after tying the game the Pirates took the lead with a goal from midfielder Zenden Barbari

“It was tough but we got the results and that’s all that matters,” said Defender Gerardo

Serna.

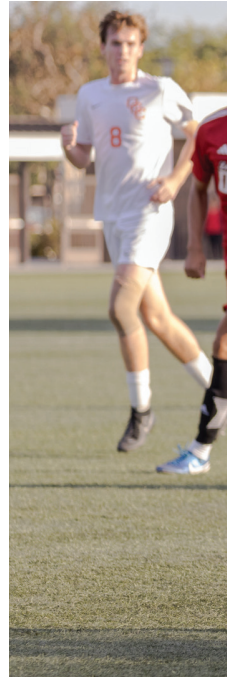
SAC didn’t back down and continued looking to tie the game. Winning fouls and pushing forward the Dons tied the game with a beautiful shot by forward Alfredo Ceja.

Two minutes later the Pirates took advantage of a mistake from SAC defenders, letting midfielder Zenden through and securing the third goal for OCC.

The Dons tied the game once again midfielder Ivan Torres dribbling past OCC goalie and tying the game 3-3. Four minutes later the Dons scored the winning goal from a rebound.

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winning goal from a rebound.

"They had the heart to come back and get the three points that we needed," said Coach Vasquez.

The Dons didn't back down and fought till the end to get the win.

SAC is looking forward to making the playoffs.

Santa Ana College now sits second in the Orange Empire Conference standings and will close out the season against Cypress on Fri, Nov. 1.

Dons take down the Chargers in the final home match of the conference

PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 20, 2024



The Dons won the last home game of the season in a thrilling match on Friday against the Chargers with a final score of 4-1.

SAC needed a boost of confidence for their last home game since they were coming from a 3-0 loss against Saddleback college. The Dons finished the Orange Empire Conference in second place, ending with a record of 8-3-3.

The Dons kicked off the game in a slow start with the Chargers, taking a gru-

eling 15 minutes until they found the net. Despite being down a goal, the Dons fought back and gained control of the game securing a tie with a header goal from forward Alejandro Oropeza-SAC turned the second half around and kept control of the ball bypassing and dribbling through the Cypress College defenders.

“We didn’t start that sharp but I think sometimes you need something like that to wake you up and we definitely stepped after that,” said

Coach Vasquez.

Substituted midfielder Juan Manzano scored the second goal for the Dons off a rebound only six minutes after coming on. Four minutes later Dons midfielder Ivan Torres scored the third

said forward Alejandro Oropeza.

The Dons are hoping to keep their momentum a couple hard games, having played Cypress twice.

SAC will go on the road for the first playoff game of the



goal, coming behind Cypress defenders and kicking the ball through the legs of the goalkeeper. The Dons continued dominating the game, securing a third goal to finish off the game.

“We put four against our opponent, right in time for the playoffs. It was that confidence boost that we needed,”

season against Cypress college on Wednesday, Nov. 20.



Still Kickin': Coach Jose Vasquez reflects on legendary career

PUBLISHED OCTOBER 28, 2024

When you walk into soccer head coach Jose Vasquez's office you are surrounded by triumph. Photos of him as a young star on the recent-

was offered to be inducted once again for his coaching achievements. However, Vasquez brushed it off, stating "Save that for when I'm dead."



But before his 20 legendary years of coaching the Dons to victory, he never saw himself in this position.

"I didn't want to be a coach," he said. "Honestly, that wasn't for me, I didn't need the money. I didn't want to coach at all."

Now he thrives in his role, leading Santa Ana to become one of the premiere programs in the

ly-formed LA Galaxy, championship rings on his desk, trophies and awards covering the walls—all tokens from his playing and coaching career at Santa Ana College.

After being inducted into the SAC Hall of Fame for his playing days in 2007, he

state.

When he starts practice, the team gathers in the locker room while he gives a speech to his players. He talks in a stern tone, commanding the attention to the center of the room. He is dressed in a jersey, just like

his players. No one is above anyone else.

While in the shooting drills, he puts himself into the drill along with his team. He moves around with poise and power like he could still play with the pros.

However, Vasquez didn't grow up around soccer. "My dad and uncle played professional baseball in Mexico."

He eventually started playing soccer at 13 and grew a passion for the sport.

He continued playing throughout junior high and high school until former SAC head coach J.P. Frutos approached him. "He pulled me aside when I was playing at Santa Ana High," said Vasquez. "He told me that not only is he going to make me a better player, he's going to make

me a better man and that's what led me to SAC."

Vasquez gave everything he had to the Dons, breaking multiple records and earning league MVP in his two years of being a student-athlete.



Scan below to read the rest of the Coach Vasquez profile:





SAC ended the season with a heartbreak loss in penatlies against Cypress in the first round of playoffs Nov. 20. The Dons ended the season 10-6-5 with 8-3-3 in conference.



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