

# STANFORD ATHLETICS



## MEDIA RELATIONS

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## 2010 MPSF TOURNAMENT (Nov. 26-28, 2010)

### DAY 2 (Nov. 27)

#### Avery Aquatic Center – Championship Semifinal

#### Game 6 – (1) California vs. (4) Stanford

Stanford – 2 2 2 2 = 8

California – 2 1 2 1 = 6

Stanford Goal Scorers – Rudolph 2, Smith 2, Noll, Pulido, Watkins, Wright

California Goal Scorers – Saponjic 2, Cupido, Dudley, Rackov, Steffens

Goalie Saves: - Parsons 10 (C); Pingree 7 (S)

**STANFORD, Calif.** – Fourth-seeded Stanford shook up the MPSF Tournament field Saturday at Avery Aquatic Center, defeating No. 1 seed California, 8-6, to book passage to Sunday's championship game.

The Cardinal will face the winner of Saturday second semifinal between UCLA and USC in Sunday's championship game at 3 p.m.

Paul Rudolph and Jacob Smith each scored twice for the Cardinal, while Travis Noll, Alex Pulido, Forrest Watkins and Sage Wright all added goals. Luka Saponjic led California with two goals.

In the cage, both goalies were kept busy, with Stanford's Brian Pingree making seven saves and California's Justin Parsons stopping 10 shots.

Wright and Smith scored the goals that clinched things for the Cardinal. Wright's power-play goal coming out of a timeout with 3:29 remaining put the Cardinal ahead for good at 7-6, and Smith buried the five-meter penalty shot that made it a two-goal lead at 8-6 with 1:44 left.

Two defensive stops later and Stanford was celebrating its first MPSF Tournament title game appearance since 2005.

Stanford wasted no time setting the tone in Saturday's contest, as Wright's steal led to a goal from Watkins just 41 seconds into the game.

California would answer, though, getting a 6-on-5 goal from Saponjic and an even-strength effort from Brian Dudley to go ahead, 2-1. Things looked to be staying that way for the rest of the period but

Smith was able to bring the Cardinal crowd to its feet with a lob shot that just cleared the line as the horn sounded to end the period, tying it up at 2-2.

The Cardinal carried that momentum into the next frame, knocking on the door until finally Travis Noll got the go-ahead goal. A minute later, Stanford would go on the man-advantage and Rudolph would fire home one of his own as the Cardinal doubled up at 4-2.

The Golden Bears would halve the Cardinal lead unexpectedly as Giacomo Cupido, at the left wing, hurled a no-look backhand from about seven meters away that went cross-cage and into the lower corner. Cupido's shot made it 4-3, and strong defense from both sides would keep it that way as the teams made the switch.

Alex Pulido put Stanford back up by two about a minute into the new half, but the two-goal lead didn't last long as California drew a five-meter penalty shot on the ensuing trip down the pool. Ivan Rackov converted for the Golden Bears at 6:37, making it a one-goal game once more.

With just over two minutes to go in the frame, Smith broke free and found himself one-on-one with Parsons after a great setup from Wright. But Smith's shot was stopped off the arm of Parsons.

Rudolph, though, would pick up his teammate after a defensive stop, firing true with a cross-cage shot from the left wing that found the upper 90, putting Stanford ahead, 6-4. Yet once more, the delirium would be short-lived, as Saponjic found an opening to score with 29 seconds left and make it 6-5 Stanford.

Stanford just missed an opportunity to go back up by two early in the fourth as Jeffrey Schwimer got free at two meters but put his shot just high and off the crossbar. California's Charlie Steffens would make the Cardinal pay for the missed opportunity, converting a one-timer on the power play with 5:19 remaining to equalize at 6-6.

At this point, the Cardinal defense dug in and refused to yield. Outside of Steffens' goal, Pingree would not face another shot on frame as the defense made numerous steals and drew key offensive fouls.

A California exclusion with 3:37 remaining set the endgame in motion, as following a Stanford timeout, Wright fired home moments after the restart to put the Cardinal ahead for good.