

## **Santa Rosa Shocks Three-Time Defending Champion Santa Ana, Claiming First Hyundai Ca Community College Men's Soccer Championship Crown**

**LEMOORE, Calif.** - In 100 previous contests, Santa Ana College lost just one men's soccer game en route to 101 Hyundai-Californian State Community College championships, with a victory in Game No. 101 meaning an unprecedented fourth consecutive title.

But the Dons were unable to beat Santa Rosa goalie Jeff Gibson, as a marker by forward Hugo Garcia in the 78th minute was enough to propel the Bear Cubs to a 1-0 triumph and their first state crown.

Gibson made three spectacular saves in the first half, robbing Randy Zepeda, Santiago Galvez and Victor Ferre. Gibson earned a share of the tournament MVP award with defensive midfielder John Lopez. Both are also Santa Rosa captains.

The physical contest saw the sides combine for 48 fouls, including five yellow-card cautions.

Prior to the lone goal, Santa Ana was whistled for a foul at the top of its own penalty box. On the restart, while Alvarado ran left on a fake, Andres Flores tapped the ball a few inches to Canela for a shot. The ball caught a Santa Rosa wall, bounded high into the air and through the upper left-hand corner of the net past 'keeper Daniel Mori.

The triumph avenged a state semifinals setback to Santa Ana in 1999. It also prevented the Dons from matching Santa Ana's record for the all-time record of five state championships.

Santa Rosa finishes the season as the lone undefeated team in the state at 21-0-4, and could claim the national title by knocking Santa Ana off its perch as the nation's top-rated team.

### **QUOTES:**

Lopez: "Some thought we'd be lucky to be here after just getting past Allan Hancock in the semifinals." SR scored a 1-1 tie, then beat the Bulldogs in overtime, 3-2, on Saturday. "There would be no title if we didn't win that game against Santa Ana, we just depended on each other and worked hard. We really are a family, so just because we beat Santa Ana didn't mean we would have to do any different to win."

Gibson: "I made some good saves and was on top of my game the last two days. But that shot off the goal post in the 61st minute, a 22-yard direct free kick by Dons forward Julio Laguna struck the base of the right post and was eventually cleared by Bear Cubs defenders. "We might have settled down earlier if we were not the underdog, but we had to be us a reason to prove that we could beat them, too."

*Reported by Nick Pellegrino, Soccer Championship PR Director*