

## Mustang men fall to No. 2 Saint Francis

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JOLIET, Ill. - For the second time in a month, the Mount Mercy men's basketball team gave nationally-ranked Saint Francis a good battle, falling, 99-91, here Monday night at the Sullivan Center.

The teams met in late November with the Fighting Saints pulling out a 94-92 win in Cedar Rapids.

Ben Struss led a balanced attack for the Mustangs on Monday, finishing with 20 points. Chris Ford added 13 points and 10 assists. Alex Houston also finished with 13 points for Mount Mercy (9-4).

St. Francis (11-1), ranked No. 2 in NAIA Division II, led 41-34 at halftime and maintained the margin in the second half, Ilya Ilyayev had 26 points and 13 rebounds while Edvinas Presniakovas added 24 for the Fighting Saints.

**MOUNT MERCY (91):** Ben Struss 7-11 2-2 20; Chris Ford 4-7 4-6 13; Alex Houston 4-10 5-6 13; Kyle Lamaak 4-6 1-2 9; Tre Wagner 1-5 6-9 8; Derik Gogg 3-6 0-0 6; Sheawn Bedford, Jr. 2-5 0-0 6; Antwain Strong 2-2 0-0 5; Mychael Brawner 1-4 1-2 4; CJ Parker 1-4 2-3 4; Blake Murdock 1-4 0-0 3. Totals 30-64 21-30 91.

**SAINT FRANCIS (99):** Ilya Ilyayev 10-17 6-8 26; Edvinas Presniakovas 4-10 13-14 24; Iain Morison 3-4 5-7 12; Landus Anderson 3-9 4-4 10; Jo Ballesterio 3-8 0-0 9; Jean Pietrzak 4-4 0-0 9; Jake Raspopovich 1-3 4-4 6; Breshion Tucker 0-3 3-6 3; Jens Kennedy 0-0 0-0 0; Logan Timmons 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 28-58 35-43 99.

Halftime: St. Francis 41, Mount Mercy 34. 3-point goals: Mount Mercy 10-22 ( Struss 4-7; Bedford, Jr. 2-4; Brawner 1-3; Strong 1-1; Murdock 1-3; Ford 1-2; Parker 0-1; Wagner 0-1), Saint Francis 8-24 (Ballesterio, 3-8; Presniakovas 3-6; Morison, 1-1; Pietrzak 1-1; Anderson 0-4; Ilyayev 0-4). Fouled out: Wagner, Raspopovich. Rebounds: Mount Mercy 9 (Parker 5; Wagner 5), Saint Francis 44 (Ilyayev 13). Assists: Mount Mercy 21 (Ford 10), Saint Francis 15 (Raspopovich 6). Total fouls: Mount Mercy 29, Saint Francis, IL 24. Technical fouls: Struss. A-285

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