Sophomore Ally Titsworth (Holmes Beach, Fla.) tallied the first brace of her collegiate career to lead the Lees-McRae College women's soccer team to a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Limestone College

in Conference Carolinas play on Wednesday evening at Tate Field. Lees-McRae (8-3-1, 7-1 CC) controlled the run of play for the majority of the match, outshooting Limestone (7-4, 5-2 CC) by a 30-5 margin, including a 17-3 advantage in the first half.

Titsworth accounted for all of the Bobcats' scoring in the match, tallying a pair of unassisted goals as Kaitlyn Briggs (Oviedo, Fla.) posted a trio of saves between the pipes. Sarah Mahar (Jacksonville, Fla.) and Meagan Thornton (Millville, N.J.) paced the Bobcats with six and five shots, respectively, while MaryBeth Sullivan (Greensboro, N.C.) and Emily Jones (Leonardtown, Md.) each posted four attempts at goal.

Ashley Spanitz posted the lone goal of the night for the Saints, pacing the team with two shots as Gabriella Reid notched an assist. Tori Waddell recorded seven saves in the match for Limestone.

Lees-McRae nearly got off to a flying start in the eighth minute, when Sullivan won the ball off a goal kick and played it through to a streaking Mahar, whose skillful effort narrowly missed the right post. After the Saints forced a pair of stops from Briggs, Waddell made a tremendous diving save in the 21st minute to preserve the deadlock, parrying a glorious one-on-one chance from Thornton.

Titsworth would net the breakthrough in the 28th minute, collecting a loose ball in the box and blasting a strike off the diving keeper to give the Bobcats a 1-0 lead. The Bobcats continued to press the attack in search of a second over the final 15 minutes of the half, nearly doubling the advantage in the 33rd minute when Mahar's effort was pulled off the line and Jones' follow-up attempt was parried by Waddell.

Limestone came out of the interval with renewed effort, matching the Bobcats' pace in search of an equalizer. The Saints' determination would be rewarded midway through the 77th minute when Reid's cross rebounded off the keeper and fell to Spanitz, leaving the midfielder in perfect position to slot the finish into the bottom corner and level the match at 1-1.

The Bobcats countered quickly, pushing forward with a trio of tests for Waddell before Titsworth netted her second of the night just over five minutes from time, winning a ball at the top of the area and sending a high looping shot into the far corner to complete the brace.

Lees-McRae returns to the pitch on Monday when the Bobcats travel to Newberry, S.C. to take on Newberry College at 3 p.m. in non-conference action.

Bobcats Battle League-Leading Saints To 1-1 Draw

Sophomore Ryan Gillespie (Holly Springs, N.C.) equalized 15 seconds after Limestone College netted the breakthrough late in the second half, propelling the Lees-McRae College men's soccer team to a hard-fought 1-1 draw in Conference Carolinas play on Wednesday night at Tate Field.

Limestone (7-3-1, 5-0-1 CC) outshot Lees-McRae (3-8-2, 2-3-2 CC) by a 25-10 margin in the match, including a 13-4 advantage in the second half while holding an 11-0 edge in corner kicks. Thomas Rusling (Sheffield, England) another strong performance for the Bobcats between the pipes, recording a season-high nine saves as Tom Godfrey made three stops for the Saints.

Gillespie paced the Bobcats with his first goal of the season, while James Smith (Eastbourne, England) and Scott Alford (Hillsborough, N.C.) each tallied an assist. Alford recorded a team-high three shots in the match as Preston Shahdad (Charlotte, N.C.) added a pair of attempts.

Thomas Metzemaekers led the way for the Saints with a goal, wihle Jack Bailey chipped in an assist and a match-high seven shots. Jorge Mackenna and Thomas McCready posted five and four shots at goal, respectively, on the night.

Bailey nearly got the Saints off to a flying start on three separate occasions in the opening 15 minutes, forcing a strong save by Rusling and narrowly missing the post on two other attempts. After Limestone's Sam Orritt had a splendid effort pulled off the line in the 25th minute, the Bobcats countered with a pair of strong runs into the attacking third, forcing Godfrey into two skillful saves on attempts by Smith and Brandon Starling (Fuquay-Varina, N.C.) shortly before the interval.

The Saints continued to push the attack in the second half, outshooting the Bobcats by a 13-4 advantage in the period as McCready and Mackenna forced Rusling into a pair of deadlock-saving stops in the opening moments. Rusling would turn in perhaps the save of the season in the 84th minute, expertly punching a driven effort from Bailey over the bar to keep the Saints off the score sheet.

Scott Hudgins (Fort Myers, Fla.) nearly provided the breakthrough for the Bobcats two minutes later, breaking free of the back line on the end of a long free kick and nodding the effort just wide of the post. Metzemaekers would net the opening goal early in the 87th minute, blasting home a rebound off a cross in from Bailey to give the Saints a 1-0 advantage.

The Bobcats answered immediately following the restart, pushing down the left flank and finding the equalizer when Smith and Alford connected to set up Gillespie for a deft finish off the post, leveling the match at 1-1 less than four minutes from time.

Both teams would have several opportunities to win the match in extra time, as Metzemaekers forced a strong save from Rusling in the first period before Alford nearly provided the winner in the 106th minute, breaking free of his marker off a free kick and sending the header inches wide of the woodwork.

Lees-McRae returns to the pitch on Wednesday, October 17 when the Bobcats host Lenoir-Rhyne University in non-conference action at 7 p.m. on Tate Field.

Photo Courtesy: Ally Titsworth, LMC Athletics