

Royals Sweep Bobcats In Conference Quarterfinals

Written by Whitney Noble

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Three members of the Queens University of Charlotte women's volleyball team recorded double-digit kills to lead the Royals to a straight set sweep of Lees-McRae College in the quarterfinal round of the Conference Carolinas Tournament on

Saturday afternoon. Queens (21-11) won the match by scores of 25-20, 25-18, and 25-20, posting a .297 hitting percentage in the contest, while limiting Lees-McRae (12-17) to a .127 clip on the attack. The Royals recorded 53 digs and 47 kills on the afternoon, as the Bobcats dug out 33 Queens attacks and posted 31 smashes.

Taylor Clendenin (Statesville, N.C.) paced the Bobcats with 11 kills to cap an outstanding career with 1,185 smashes, which ranks third all-time in program history. The senior outside hitter also recorded a service ace to end her career ranked fourth on the school's all-time list with 120 aces.

Fellow senior Megan Mitchell (Minden, Nev.) also capped a tremendous career with the Bobcats on Saturday afternoon, closing out her four-year tenure in the Green and Gold as the program's all-time leader in assists (3,654) and service aces (187) while also ranking eighth in school history in digs (714).

Rachel Grether (Ocala, Fla.) and Haydn Beatty (Norman, Okla.) each added six smashes, as Taylor Pritchett (Apex, N.C.) nearly recorded a double-double with 27 assists and nine digs. Sariah Suryadevara (Cincinnati, Ohio) chipped in nine digs of her own to end the season just 29 shy of the 1,000-mark for her career.

Lindsey Everhart led the way for Queens with a match-high 12 kills, making one error on 18 attempts to record a .611 hitting percentage. Anna Gibbs and Tori Hernandez each added 11 kills, as Gibbs posted a .556 clip on the attack and Taylor Riley nearly chipped in a double-double with a match-high 41 assists and eight digs. Alexa Sparrell added a match-high 11 digs for the Royals, while Everhart posted a contest-best four block assists.

Queens jumped out to an early 10-6 lead in the first set before the Bobcats responded, evening the tally at 13-13 on a block by Jordan Banta (Virginia Beach, Va.) and Lauren Fox (Garland, Texas) to cap a 7-3 run. The Royals would answer with an 11-6 spurt, pushing the Bobcats to set point at 24-19 before Hernandez closed out the frame with a kill.

The Royals carried the momentum into the second set, taking an early 12-9 advantage on an Ashlyn Dibrell kill before widening the gap to 20-14 with a service ace by Sparrell. Lees-McRae would counter with back-to-back points cutting the lead to 20-16 on a block by Fox and Clendenin before the Royals answered with a 5-2 spurt to cap the set and take a 2-0 advantage in the match.

The Bobcats responded early in the third, taking a 10-8 lead on the heels of a 3-0 spurt that was capped by a Beatty smash. Queens would answer with a 7-1 surge, claiming a 15-11 advantage following an Everhart smash before Lees-McRae responded with a 7-3 run to even the tally at 18-18 on a Royal miscue. The Royals countered once again after a timeout, answering with a 7-2 spurt of their own to cap the set and the match following a Sparrell service ace.

Lees-McRae is expected to return 10 letter-winners from this year's squad, including rising seniors Beatty, Fox, and Molly Corhn (Hendersonville, N.C.).

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Photo Courtesy: Taylor Pritchett, LMC Athletics