

Bobcats Rally To Win In Five Sets

Written by Whitney Noble
Friday, 22 March 2013 06:39

Jose Ribas (Guaynabo, Puerto Rico) recorded a match-high 23 kills and a .378 hitting percentage, as the Lees-McRae College men's volleyball team rallied from a 2-0 deficit to defeat New Jersey Institute

of Technology in a five-set thriller on Thursday evening in Williams Gymnasium.

Lees-McRae (16-8) won the match by scores of 23-25, 18-25, 25-22, 25-17, and 15-13, extending its winning streak to three matches while holding NJIT (4-17) to a .233 clip on the attack. The Bobcats tallied 61 kills, 32 digs, nine blocks and a .235 hitting percentage in the contest, as the Highlanders recorded 55 smashes, 33 digs, and eight stuffs.

Ribas led the way for Lees-McRae with a season- and match-high 23 kills, including seven in the third set, as Javier Jimenez (San Sebastian, Puerto Rico) added nine smashes of his own. Joshua Jones (Christmas, Fla.) and Matt Harpenau (Cincinnati, Ohio) each chipped in eight kills, while Randy Ramirez (Guaynabo, Puerto Rico) and Efrain Negron (Caguas, Puerto Rico) posted match-highs of 49 assists and 10 digs, respectively. John Lucas (Cincinnati, Ohio) recorded a contest-best five blocks (one solo, four assists), as Ramirez, Jones, and Harpenau each tallied three block assists.

Kajetan Borecki paced the Highlanders with 13 kills, while Dhruv Lad and Chris Kaepernick added 11 and 10 smashes, respectively. Doug Battersby chipped in nine kills and a team-high four blocks (one solo, three assists), as Matthew Lui tallied 44 assists. Brady Smith posted a squad-best nine digs for the Highlanders.

NJIT jumped out to a strong start in the first set, opening an early 15-11 lead before the Bobcats battled back, taking a 16-15 advantage on a Ribas kill to cap a 5-0 spurt. The Highlanders would answer with an 8-6 run, claiming a narrow 23-22 advantage following a Battersby smash before taking the set on a Bobcat miscue.

Lees-McRae responded in the second, kicking off the set with a 5-1 run before NJIT countered, launching a 15-5 run to take a 16-10 lead following a Bobcat miscue. The Bobcats would fight back with a 4-2 spurt, trimming the margin to 18-15 on a Ribas service ace. NJIT answered with a 7-3 run, closing out the frame and taking a commanding 2-0 lead in the match following a solo block by Battersby.

The Bobcats rallied from an early 7-5 deficit in the third frame, countering with a 9-4 run to claim a 14-11 lead on a Ribas smash. After Lees-McRae pushed the advantage to 19-14, the Highlanders answered with a 7-3 spurt, closing the gap to 22-21 following a Bobcat miscue. The Bobcats quickly responded with three of the next four points, cutting the match advantage to 2-1 on an emphatic smash by Ribas.

NJIT answered in the fourth, opening the frame with a 12-9 run before the Bobcats cut the lead to 13-12 on a Jones ace. After the Highlanders claimed a 16-14 advantage following an ace from Kevin Van Oss, the Bobcats responded with an 11-1 surge, evening the match and forcing a decisive fifth set on a pair of Ribas smashes.

The fifth frame proved to be a tightly contested battle, with Lees-McRae taking an early 7-6 lead on a block by Ramirez and Harpenau before NJIT responded, evening the tally at 10-10 following a Battersby smash. The Bobcats would counter with a 3-1 spurt, claiming a 13-11 advantage on a textbook solo block by Lucas before Jones and Jimenez capped the set and the

Bobcats Rally To Win In Five Sets

Written by Whitney Noble

Friday, 22 March 2013 06:39

match with a pair of emphatic kills.

Lees-McRae returns to the court on Saturday when the Bobcats travel to Fairfax, Va. to take on NCAA Division I George Mason University at 7 p.m.

Photo Courtesy: Jose Ribas, LMC Athletics