

Clendenin Powers Bobcat Past King

Written by Staff Reports

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Junior Taylor Clendenin (Statesville, N.C.) posted a season-high 19 kills and a scorching .654 hitting percentage to lead the Lees-McRae College women's volleyball team to a come-from-behind 3-1 victory over King College in Conference Carolinas play on Tuesday night in Williams Gymnasium.

Lees-McRae (16-6, 11-0 CC) won the match by scores of 21-25, 25-12, 25-18, and 25-14, extending its winning streak to 14 contests overall and 42 straight victories in league play, while sweeping the season series against King (11-11, 5-4 CC). The Bobcats posted a combined .328 hitting percentage on the night, holding King to a .117 clip on the attack while registering seven blocks and 54 digs.

Clendenin led all hitters with 19 kills on 26 swings, posting a season-high .654 hitting percentage while also notching a double-double with 10 digs. Megan Epperson (St. John, Ind.) chipped in 13 kills and a match-high five service aces, while Dana Oliver (Davie, Fla.) nearly posted a triple-double with 11 kills, eight digs, and seven assists. Megan Mitchell (Minden, Nev.) nearly recorded a double-double of her own with 38 assists and nine digs, while Sariah Suryadevara (Cincinnati, Ohio) and Jessica Singewald (Port St. Lucie, Fla.) chipped in match-highs of 14 digs and four blocks, respectively.

Ashley Pittman paced the Tornado with nine kills, while Sarah Van Goethem nearly accounted for a double-double with 12 digs and eight kills. Jessica Hammond added eight digs, while Shannon Earwood chipped in 19 assists and three blocks. Mariah Herington also posted a match-high four blocks.

The Bobcats got off to a strong start in the first set, opening an early 7-2 lead on a block by Epperson and Singewald before King responded, launching a 15-9 run to claim a 17-16 lead on a block by Herington and Kelsey Griffiths. King held on from there, closing out the frame with an 8-5 spurt to take a 1-0 lead in the match.

Lees-McRae answered in the second set, opening the frame with an 11-5 run that was capped by a Clendenin smash. After King countered with two of the next three points, the Bobcats responded with an 8-2 run, claiming a 20-9 lead on another kill from Clendenin. Lees-McRae then closed out the set with a 5-3 spurt to even the tally at 1-1 following back-to-back smashes by Singewald.

The Bobcats carried the momentum into the third set, taking an early 10-5 lead on an Oliver kill. King would cut the lead to 12-10 before the Bobcats responded, launching an 8-2 run to open a 20-12 lead on a smash by Clendenin. The Tornado answered with a spurt of their own, trimming the margin to 22-17 with a 5-2 run before the Bobcats answered with a 3-1 surge to close out the set on a kill by Epperson.

The fourth set proved to be a tightly contested affair in the early going until, with the score knotted at 11-11, the Bobcats went on a 12-1 run to take a commanding 23-12 lead in the frame following Epperson's fifth ace of the match. Lees-McRae then closed out the set and the match on Clendenin's 19th kill of the night to give the Bobcats the 25-14 victory in the fourth frame.

Lees-McRae returns to the court on Friday when the Bobcats host Queens University of Charlotte in a pivotal conference clash at 7 p.m. in Williams Gymnasium.

Lenoir-Rhyne Takes Care Of Brevard, 3-1 In Volleyball

The Lenoir-Rhyne University Volleyball Team (12-9, 4-6) picked up a 3-1 road win over Brevard (4-14, 0-11) Tuesday night in a South Atlantic Conference match at Boshamer Gymnasium.

The Bears won by scores of 25-20, 21-25, 25-14 and 25-12.

Freshman outside hitter Whitney Brinkley (Asheville, N.C.) led L-R with a team-high 15 kills to go along with 11 digs while junior setter Meredith Lutz (Newton, N.C.) dished out 44 assists as the Bears snapped their two-match losing streak.

Freshman middle blocker Haley Rhyne (Statesville, N.C.) and sophomore middle blocker Kayla Morrow (China Grove, N.C.) added 12 and 10 kills, respectively, for Lenoir-Rhyne.

Jamie Atkinson (Spartanburg, S.C.) finished with 15 kills and 13 digs while Bethany Stevenson (Prattville, Ala.) added 32 assists for the Tornados in the losing effort.

Brevard's Lindsay Rogers (Hickory, N.C.) totaled a match-high 25 digs as well but the Tornados continue to search for their first conference win of the year.

Lenoir-Rhyne travels to Anderson, S.C., to take on Anderson in a South Atlantic Conference match on Friday beginning at 7 p.m. Brevard plays at Newberry on Friday at 7 p.m.