

Bobcats Ranked 5th In Aces Per Set

Written by Staff Reprts

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The Lees-McRae College women's volleyball team is ranked fifth in the nation in aces per set, announced NCAA officials Tuesday with the release of this week's NCAA Division II women's volleyball statistics.

Lees-McRae (20-8, 14-0 Conference Carolinas) has won 17 of its last 19 matches, opening the league schedule with 14 straight victories to extending its conference winning streak to 47 consecutive contests. The Bobcats enter the week ranked fifth in the nation in aces per set (2.65), while also being listed 49th in assists per frame (12.04), 51st in winning percentage (0.714), 56th in kills per set (12.86), and 83rd in hitting percentage (0.205).

Junior Megan Mitchell (Minden, Nev.) and freshman Sariah Suryadevara (Cincinnati, Ohio) are ranked 15th and 18th in aces per set with averages of 0.63 and 0.61, respectively. Mitchell is also listed 52nd in assists per set (9.97), while Suryadevara is ranked 37th in digs per frame (5.05). Senior Megan Epperson (St. John, Ind.) enters the week ranked 42nd in points per set (4.38) and 53rd in points per frame (3.74), while freshman Taylor Pritchett (Apex, N.C.) is listed 70th in aces per set (0.47).

Lees-McRae returns to the court on Friday when the Bobcats travel to Hartsville, S.C. to take on Coker College in conference play at 7 p.m.

Saints Blank Bobcats, 2-0

The Limestone College women's soccer team scored twice in the first half, and held off a furious rally by Lees-McRae College en route to a 2-0 win in Conference Carolinas play on Tuesday afternoon.

Lees-McRae (12-3-1, 11-1 CC) controlled the run of play for much of the match, outshooting Limestone (11-5, 8-3 CC) by a 12-8 margin as each side put five attempts on frame. The Bobcats also held a 6-2 advantage in corner kicks, as the Saints snapped LMC's 13-match unbeaten streak and denied the Bobcats an unblemished record in conference play.

Meagan Thornton (Millville, N.J.), Brooke Santerre (Port Republic, Md.), Kaitlyn Kerrigan (Lakewood Ranch, Fla.) each tallied two shots for the Bobcats, while freshman goalkeeper Kaitlyn Briggs (Oviedo, Fla.) made three saves between the pipes.

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Ashley Alderin-Fleagle and Gabriella Reid each found the back of the net for Limestone, as Alderin-Fleagle tallied her nation-leading 18th goal of the season. Vanessa Jarrett and Tillman Fennell each added an assist, as Kristin Alderin-Fleagle recorded five saves to keep the clean sheet.

Ashley Alderin-Fleagle broke the deadlock just before the 13-minute mark, collecting a loose ball in the back and beating the keeper to give Limestone an early 1-0 advantage. Reid doubled the advantage to 2-0 in the 42nd minute, taking a well-timed back heel pass from Fennell following a cross from Jarrett, and slotting the finish into the bottom corner to send the Saints into the interval with a two-goal lead.

The Bobcats came out firing in the second half, outshooting the Saints by a 7-3 margin in the final 45 minutes as the Limestone back line held Lees-McRae off the scoreboard for the duration of the period. Perhaps Lees-McRae's best scoring chance came in the 72nd minute, when MaryBeth Sullivan's (Greensboro, N.C.) finishing effort found the keeper's hands after the sophomore forward was left all alone in front of goal.

Lees-McRae returns to the pitch on Saturday when the Bobcats travel to Mars Hill, N.C. to take on Mars Hill College in their regular season finale. Kickoff is slated for 4:30 p.m.

Bobcats Rally By Saints In OT

Freshman Ryan Gillespie (Holly Springs, N.C.) scored his first collegiate goal midway through the 102nd minute to lead the Lees-McRae College men's soccer team to a 2-1 come-from-behind victory over Limestone College in Conference Carolinas play on Tuesday afternoon.

With the win, Lees-McRae (12-4-1, 9-2 CC) clinches at least the second overall seed in next week's conference tournament, while guaranteeing the Bobcats a home match in the quarterfinal and semifinal rounds. Limestone (10-6, 6-4 CC) outshot the Bobcats by a 23-12 margin, including an 18-11 advantage in regulation time, as Lees-McRae took seven corners to the Saints' four.

Scott Alford (Hillsborough, N.C.) and Gillespie each found the back of the net for the Bobcats, while Preston Shahdad (Charlotte, N.C.) and Luke Staats (Almere, Netherlands) both tallied an assist in the match. Sophomore Thomas Rusling (Sheffield, England) played the full duration of the match between the pipes for the Bobcats, making eight saves.

Thomas Keen tallied the lone goal for Limestone, as Jack Bailey and Jorge MacKenna made six and four attempts, respectively, on frame. Kyle Karagitz manned the goal mouth for the full

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duration, making four saves for the Saints.

The match remained scoreless until midway through the 77th minute, when Keen found the back of the net with a diving header off a loose ball in the box to give Limestone a 1-0 lead.

Lees-McRae netted the equalizer in the final minute of regulation for the second time this season, as Alford nodded home a long cross from Shahdad at the 89:29 mark to send the match into extra time level at 1-1.

Limestone controlled the run of play throughout the first extra time period, outshooting the Bobcats by a 5-0 margin in the first 10 minutes of overtime. Neither team would find the winner in that span, however, sending the match into the second extra time period. Gillespie then delivered the decisive strike midway through the 102nd minute, scoring his first collegiate goal off a cross from Staats to give the Bobcats a 2-1 come-from-behind victory.

Lees-McRae returns to the pitch on Saturday when the Bobcats travel to Milligan College, Tenn. to take on Milligan College in their regular season finale at 2:30 p.m.