

Epperson Claims All-time Digs Mark; Bobcats Clinch Conference Title

Written by Staff Reports

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Senior Megan Epperson (St. John, Ind.) recorded a match-high 12 kills and six digs to become the program's all-time leader in digs, and lead the Lees-McRae College women's volleyball team to a 3-1 win over Belmont Abbey College on Wednesday night to clinch the school's 13th Conference Carolinas regular season championship.

Lees-McRae (23-8, 17-0 CC) won the match by

scores of 25-23, 25-19, 18-25, and 25-22, holding Belmont Abbey (17-14, 9-8 CC) to a .157 hitting percentage while extending its conference winning streak to 48 straight matches. The Bobcats posted a .173 hitting percentage on the night, while recording 14 service aces and seven blocks. Belmont Abbey notched 10 blocks and five service aces.

Epperson paced the Bobcats with 12 kills, while recording six digs to become the program's all-time leader with 1,191 career savers. Megan Mitchell (Minden, Nev.), Jessica Singewald (Port St. Lucie, Fla.), and Lauren Fox (Garland, Texas) each tallied seven kills, while Taylor Clendenin (Statesville, N.C.) and Kallai Johnston (Statesville, N.C.) both notched six smashes. Mitchell posted 33 assists and six digs, while Clendenin chipped in six savers and a match-high six service aces. Sariah Suryadevara (Cincinnati, Ohio) posted a match-high 16 digs, while Taylor Pritchett (Apex, N.C.) added six savers. Clendenin also chipped in a team-best three blocks.

Angela Jubb led the way for Belmont Abbey with 11 kills and eight digs, while Stefanie Holler added 10 smashes and four blocks. Bria James chipped in a team-high 13 digs to go along with eight kills, while Lydia Schellenberg added 11 savers and six smashes. Victoria Jensen posted a match-high five blocks, while Holler added four stuffs. Kay Schellenberg chipped in a match-high 34 assists to go along with three blocks.

The first set proved to be a tightly contested affair, with neither team claiming more than a four-point advantage for the duration of the frame. Belmont Abbey rallying from a 14-11 deficit to take a 16-15 lead on a Jubb kill before the Bobcats responded, claiming a 22-18 advantage on a Clendenin service ace to cap a 7-2 run. After the Abbey cut the lead to 24-23 on a Bobcat miscue, before Singewald closed out the set with a kill.

Belmont Abbey responded early in the second set, taking an early 11-5 lead on a James kill before the Bobcats countered with a 10-3 run, claiming a 15-14 advantage on an Epperson ace. Then, with the score level at 18-18, the Bobcats closed out the set with a 7-1 run to claim a 2-0 lead in the match on a Singewald kill.

The Abbey answered in the third set, opening a 15-11 lead on a kill by Lydia Schellenberg before closing out the frame with a 10-7 spurt which was capped by a Holler smash.

Lees-McRae battled its way through the fourth set, taking a 21-18 lead on a Clendenin ace before Belmont Abbey answered with a 4-0 run to claim a narrow 22-21 advantage. The Bobcats responded once again, tallying four straight points to close out the set and the match on an Abbey miscue.

Lees-McRae returns to the court on Saturday when the Bobcats host Limestone College to close out their conference and regular season schedule. First serve is slated for 2 p.m. in Williams Gymnasium following the Bobcats' senior day festivities.

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