

Bobcats Headed To First NCAA Tournament

Written by Staff Reports

Saturday, 05 November 2011 23:28

The top-seeded and Conference Carolinas regular season champion Lees-McRae College women's soccer team edged third-seeded Belmont Abbey College in a penalty kick shootout to win the program's second conference tournament title, and punch the school's first-ever ticket to the

NCAA Tournament on Saturday afternoon on Tate Field.

Lees-McRae (13-4-3) outshot Belmont Abbey (12-7-2) by a 13-8 margin, including a 4-1 edge in the first half, in a defense battle. Lees-McRae's Kaitlyn Briggs (Oviedo, Fla.) and Belmont Abbey's Hannah Kohls recorded five and three saves, respectively, to each keep a clean sheet. The match remained scoreless through regulation and each period of extra time, as the teams headed into a decisive penalty kick shootout. Seniors Vickie Rich (Arlington Heights, Ill.) and Brooke Santerre (Port Republic, Md.) converted each of their opportunities to give the Bobcats a 2-0 lead in the shootout, and after Belmont Abbey took advantage of their third and fourth chances, freshman Ariana Smith (Jackson, N.J.) and senior Jessica O'Leary (Millbury, Mass.) buried their attempts to send the Bobcats to the NCAA Tournament for the first time in school history.

Lees-McRae senior defender Mary Dorn (Shallotte, N.C.) earned tournament MVP honors, while Emily Jones (Leonardtown, Md.), O'Leary, Smith, and Santerre were each named to the all-tournament team.

With the result, Lees-McRae earns the Conference Carolinas' automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament, and now await the announcement of the tournament field via the NCAA Selection Show on Monday night at 7 p.m. The selection show will air via NCAA.com.

Conference Carolinas all-Tournament Team

Mary Dorn (MVP), Lees-McRae

Emily Jones, Lees-McRae

Jessica O'Leary, Lees-McRae

Ariana Smith, Lees-McRae

Brooke Santerre, Lees-McRae

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Jill Maykut, Pfeiffer
Holli Swartz, Limestone
Carly Kensinger, Belmont Abbey
Kiera Woerner, Belmont Abbey
Hannah Kohls, Belmont Abbey

Bobcats ace Saints in straight-set sweep

The Lees-McRae College women's volleyball team recorded 15 service aces en route to a straight set sweep over Limestone College on Saturday afternoon, clinching its second consecutive unblemished worksheet in Conference Carolinas play in its regular season finale. Lees-McRae (24-8, 18-0 CC) won the match by scores of 25-13, 25-18, and 25-13, holding Limestone (15-17, 10-7 CC) to a -.064 clip on the attack while posting a .279 hitting percentage of its own. With the win, the Bobcats extend their conference winning streak to 49 straight matches.

Lauren Fox (Garland, Texas) and Megan Epperson (St. John, Ind.) each tallied a match-high seven kills for the Bobcats, as Megan Mitchell (Minden, Nev.) and Sariah Suryadevara (Cincinnati, Ohio) both posted a contest-best five service aces. Taylor Clendenin (Statesville, N.C.) added five kills and seven digs, while Epperson and Suryadevara dug out seven and six Saint attacks, respectively. Senior Jessica Singewald (Port St. Lucie, Fla.) and Fox each chipped in a match-high four blocks.

Lees-McRae jumped out to an early 13-6 lead in the first set on a block by Fox and Kallai Johnston (Statesville, N.C.), before pushing the margin to 18-8 on back-to-back smashes from Fox. The Bobcats then closed out the set with a 7-5 spurt that was capped by a Saint serving error.

Limestone answered early in the second set, grabbing a narrow 10-9 lead before the Bobcats responded, launching a 14-6 run to claim a 23-16 advantage on a Singewald service ace prior to closing out the set on a Clendenin smash.

The Bobcats surged out to an 11-2 lead in the third set, claiming the advantage on a block by Epperson and Singewald. After Limestone cut the margin to 14-8 with a 6-3 run, Lees-McRae countered with an 11-5 spurt to take the set and the match on a Saint miscue.

Lees-McRae returns to the court on Tuesday when the Bobcats host the quarterfinal round of the Conference Carolinas Tournament against an opponent to be determined.

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