

No. 5 Cobras edge Bobcats In Conference Finals

Written by Staff Reports

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The No. 5 Coker College men's soccer team scored just over one minute into the second half and held off a late charge by Lees-McRae College en route to a 1-0 victory in the Conference Carolinas Tournament Championship on Sunday afternoon.

Coker (18-2) outshot Lees-McRae (14-5-1) by a 13-6

margin, including an 8-4 advantage in the first half, while holding a 6-2 edge on corner kicks. Noah Lascell tallied the lone goal of the match for Coker, while Niko Tirkkonen added an assist. James Sweeney made four saves to keep a clean sheet, while Lees-McRae's Thomas Rusling (Sheffield, England) recorded five stops.

Lees-McRae's Luke Duffy (Wakefield, England), James Smith (Eastbourne, England), and Scott Hudgins (Fort Myers, Fla.) were each named to the all-tournament team.

The match remained scoreless until just over one minute into the second half, when Tirkkonen found Lascell in the area, putting his teammate in perfect position for the finish to give the Cobras a 1-0 lead. Coker nearly doubled the advantage to 2-0 in the 78th minute when Jordan Snell's attempt wrung off the bar, as Sweeney was forced to make a pair of saves to preserve the clean sheet.

Lees-McRae now awaits a possible at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament. The field will be announced via the NCAA Selection Show through NCAA.com on Sunday night at 7 p.m.