

Harpenau, Bobcats rally for five-set victory

Written by Staff Reports

Saturday, 17 March 2012 00:50

Sophomore Matt Harpenau (Cincinnati, Ohio) paced the Lees-McRae College men's volleyball team with 10 kills and a match-high six block assists on Friday night, leading the Bobcats to a thrilling come-from-behind victory over New Jersey Institute of Technology in Williams Gymnasium. Lees-McRae (8-6) posted a hitting

percentage of .301 on the night, while recording 64 kills, 46 digs, and nine and a half blocks. The Bobcats held NJIT (7-11) to a .248 clip on the attack, as the Highlanders notched 54 digs, 51 kills, and eight blocks.

Jose Ribas (Guaynabo, Puerto Rico) posted a match-high 15 kills to go along with a .387 hitting percentage, as John Lucas (Cincinnati, Ohio) and Harpenau chipped in 14 and 10 smashes, respectively. Chris Flood (Louisville, Ky.) and Joshua Jones (Christmas, Fla.) added nine and seven kills, as Flood paced the Bobcats with 13 digs.

Randy Ramirez (Guaynabo, Puerto Rico) recorded a match-high 54 assists, while adding five kills and five block assists. Edmund Walkley (Glenbrook, Australia) and Efrain Negrón (Caguas, Puerto Rico) posted 10 and seven digs, respectively, as Harpenau chipped in a match-high six block assists.

Aurel Griesshammer paced the Highlanders with 15 kills, as Chris Kapernick added 11 smashes. Brady Smith posted a match-high 17 digs, while Adam Gustafson recorded a double-double with 43 assists and 12 digs.

NJIT took control early in the first set, opening an 11-6 lead before the Bobcats cut the margin to 11-9 on a block by Ramirez and Harpenau. The Highlanders would push the lead to 22-16 before Lees-McRae responded once again, cutting the lead to 22-20 with a 4-0 spurt that was capped by a Ramirez kill. NJIT then closed out the set with three straight points to take a 1-0 lead in the match.

Lees-McRae answered in the second set, taking a 13-9 advantage on a block by Lucas and Harpenau before NJIT cut the lead to 16-15 with a 6-3 spurt. After the Bobcats pushed the lead to 22-18 on a Harpenau kill, the Highlanders answered with a 3-0 spurt to cut the margin to 22-21 following a Griesshammer smash. The Bobcats responded with a 3-1 run, evening the match on a solo block by Jones to cap the set.

The third set proved to be a tightly contested affair early on, before NJIT went on a 4-0 run to take a 17-13 lead on a Bobcat miscue. NJIT would hold on from there, taking the set and a 2-1 lead in the match on a Bobcat miscue following a 6-4 spurt.

Lees-McRae countered once again in the fourth, launching an 11-6 run with the score knotted at 7-7 to take an 18-13 advantage following a solo block by Ribas. NJIT would storm back with an 8-4 run, trimming the margin to 22-21 on a kill by Herman Kantushov. After the Bobcats pushed NJIT to set point at 24-22, the Highlanders countered with back-to-back points to even the tally at 24-24. Lucas and Ribas answered for the Bobcats, tallying back-to-back kills to even the match and send it to a decisive fifth set.

The Highlanders responded early in the fifth, taking a 9-5 lead a Bobcat miscue before Lees-McRae responded, launching a 5-1 run to even the tally at 10-10 on an NJIT attack error. The Bobcats would take control from there, closing out the set and the match with a 5-2 run that was capped by an emphatic smash by Jones.

Harpenau, Bobcats rally for five-set victory

Written by Staff Reports

Saturday, 17 March 2012 00:50

Lees-McRae returns to the court on Friday, March 23 when the Bobcats resume their Conference Carolinas schedule with a matchup against Mount Olive College at 7 p.m. in Williams Gymnasium.

Photo Courtesy: Matt Harpenau, LMC Athletics