

Bobcats Ground Fleet in Straight-Set sweep

Written by Whitney Noble

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Junior Jose Ribas (Guaynabo, Puerto Rico) posted a match-high 12 kills and John Lucas (Cincinnati, Ohio) added 10 digs and eight kills to lead the Lees-McRae College men's volleyball team to a straight-set sweep of Erskine College in

Conference Carolinas play on Friday evening in Williams Gymnasium.

Lees-McRae (10-3, 6-3 CC) won the match by scores of 25-22, 25-18, and 25-18, recording a .259 hitting percentage while holding Erskine (5-8, 3-6 CC) to a .090 clip on the attack. The Bobcats posted 35 kills, 28 digs, and 10 blocks in the contest.

Ribas paced the Bobcats with a match-high 12 kills, as Lucas and Brady Markle (York, Pa.) added eight and seven smashes, respectively. Lucas chipped in a contest-best 10 digs, while Matt Harpenau (Cincinnati, Ohio) posted a match-high five blocks (five block assists). Joshua Jones (Christmas, Fla.) tallied four blocks (two solo, two assists), as Randy Ramirez (Guaynabo, Puerto Rico) posted a match-high 28 assists.

Mike Michelau led the way for Erskine with nine kills, as Mike Kawa added eight smashes and Michael Schneck chipped in a match-high 10 digs. Corey Marks dished out 22 assists in the contest, while Omar Melendez posted five kills.

Lees-McRae opened the match with a 9-5 run, capping the spurt with a Markle smash before Erskine cut the lead to 12-11 following a Kawa kill. The Bobcats would answer with a 5-2 spurt, stretching the advantage to 17-13 on a Markle smash. Erskine quickly countered with a 5-2 run of its own, trimming the margin to 19-18 with a service ace by Andrew Davis. The Bobcats responded with a 6-4 spurt, claiming a 1-0 lead in the match following a Markle kill.

Markle and the Bobcats carried the momentum into the second set, opening the frame with an 11-8 run before pushing the margin to 14-11 following a Fleet miscue. After Erskine countered with back-to-back points to cut the lead to 14-13, the Bobcats answered with a 7-3 spurt to claim a 21-16 advantage on a Markle service ace. Lees-McRae would close out the set from there, outscoring the Fleet by a 4-2 margin down the stretch to cap the frame on a solo block by Ribas.

The Bobcats started strong once again in the third, jumping out to a 16-10 lead on a block by Markle and Harpenau before pushing the advantage to 23-16 following a smash from Jones. Lees-McRae would close out the set and the match from there, capping the frame on an Erskine miscue.

Lees-McRae returns to the court on Saturday when the Bobcats travel to Belmont, N.C. to take on Belmont Abbey College in league play at 2 p.m.

Photo Courtesy: Jose Ribas, LMC Athletics