

Bulldogs Stymie Bobcats, 2-0

Written by Whitney Noble

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The Wingate University women's soccer team found the back of the net once in each half and held Lees-McRae College to three shots on frame en route to a 2-0 victory over the Bobcats in non-conference play on Wednesday evening.

Wingate (4-0-2) outshot Lees-McRae (1-4) by a 17-5 margin, including a 9-4 advantage in the second half, as the Bulldogs held a 5-2 edge in attempts from the corner. Kaitlyn Briggs (Oviedo, Fla.) made eight saves between the pipes for the Bobcats, as Ashlyn Hardie tallied three stops to keep a clean sheet for Wingate.

Meagan Thornton (Millville, N.J.), Sarah Mahar (Jacksonville, Fla.) and Cheyenne Warrick (Pikeville, N.C.) each directed a shot on frame in the contest, as Briggs posted a season-high with her eight saves, including five in the second half.

Maggie Smith and Kaitlyn Brunworth each found the back for the net for the Bulldogs, while Taryn Grivois added an assist. Jade Montgomery took a match-high three attempts at goal. The Bobcats nearly got off to a flying start early in the 24th minute, when Hardie was forced to turn Mahar's effort aside to preserve the deadlock. Wingate answered with a concerted push, sending a trio of shots toward Briggs' goal within a one-minute span, forcing the junior goalkeeper into a pair of skillful saves.

The Bulldogs would net the breakthrough in the opening moments of the 37th minute, taking a 1-0 lead when Grivois put Smith in behind with a well-timed through ball before Smith tucked the finish into the bottom corner.

Brunworth doubled the Wingate margin to 2-0 midway through the 49th minute, taking advantage of a loose rebound and slotting it past the keeper. The Bobcats would push forward with greater ambition over the next several minutes, providing a constant challenge for the Bulldog backline with their pace.

Freshman Phenix Durham (Waxhaw, N.C.) nearly found the score sheet late in the 63rd minute, sending a free kick just wide of the top corner from 30 yards out. Fellow rookie Lena Langille (Lawrencetown, Nova Scotia, Canada) came inches away from her first collegiate goal midway through the 88th, making a brilliant run into the area before her shot was deflected just wide by an alert defender.

Lees-McRae returns to the pitch on Saturday when the Bobcats host Belmont Abbey College in a pivotal showdown to open their Conference Carolinas slate at 3 p.m. on Tate Field.