

## Balanced Attack Leads Bobcats Over Crusaders

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Freshman Jordan Wright (West Lothian, Scotland) scored his first two collegiate goals, and Scott Alford (Hillsborough, N.C.) found the back of the net for the third straight match to lead the Lees-McRae College men's soccer team to a dominating 4-0 win over Belmont Abbey College in Conference Carolinas play on Saturday afternoon.

Lees-McRae (2-3, 1-0 CC) posted its second straight victory over a regional opponent, outshooting Belmont Abbey (2-3, 0-1 CC) by a 20-8 margin in the match, including a 12-5 advantage in the second half. The Bobcats also held a 6-2 edge in attempts from the corner in the contest while limiting the Crusaders to just two shots on frame.

Wright paced the Bobcats with his first two goals of the season, connecting on two of his three shots on frame, as fellow rookie Isauro Estrada (Newland, N.C.) scored his first collegiate goal on his debut with his first career attempt at goal. Alford added his third goal in as many matches, while Chris DeSanto (Greensboro, N.C.) tallied his first career assist with a perfect cross to Estrada in the second half.

Andrew Shoemaker (Cary, N.C.), Yago Xavier (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) each chipped in an assist of their own, as Thomas Rusling (Sheffield, England) kept his 15th career clean sheet with a pair of saves. Conor Wells and Declan McQuillan each made two attempts at goal for Belmont Abbey, as Dominic Schneider and Kyle Searles combined for five saves while both working one half.

The Bobcats got off to a flying start in the third minute, taking an early 1-0 lead when Alford nodded home Shoemaker's cross from the flank for his third strike in as many matches. Alford nearly doubled the advantage to 2-0 midway through the 20th minute, forcing a skillful save from Searles after a flurry of activity inside the Abbey's penalty area.

Wright accomplished the feat 10 minutes later, netting his first of the season with a beautiful finish off the outside of his boot after Xavier played him in with a perfectly timed through ball. Perhaps Belmont Abbey's best opportunity of the match came in the 50th minute, when Mitchell Hepburn came within inches of slotting home the finish only to be denied by a diving stop from Rusling.

Wright would make it a perfect second late in the 73rd minute, collecting his own rebound and firing the finish into the back of the net to give the Bobcats a commanding 3-0 lead.

Arguably the most well worked goal came midway through the 83rd, when DeSanto made a brilliant run down the left flank, and after beating his defender with a neat bit of skill, delivered a perfect cross to Estrada on the back post for the freshman's first career goal just over 10 minutes into his collegiate debut.

Lees-McRae returns to the pitch on Wednesday when the Bobcats travel to Dahlonega, Ga. to take on the University of North Georgia in Southeast Region play at 4 p.m.