

Crusaders sweep Bobcats

Written by Whitney Noble

Sunday, 22 September 2013 08:17

The Belmont Abbey College women's volleyball team tallied 33 kills and 13 service aces en route to a straight set sweep of Lees-McRae College in Conference Carolinas play on Saturday afternoon in Williams Gymnasium. Belmont Abbey (7-3, 1-1 CC) won the match by scores of 25-11, 25-16, and 25-16, attacking at a .239 clip while holding Lees-McRae (1-10, 0-2 CC) to 18 kills and four blocks. The Bobcats tallied 41 digs and four aces in the match, as the Crusaders dug out 38 Lees-McRae attacks.

Avalon Liscio (Naples, Fla.) and Jordan Banta (Virginia Beach, Va.) paced the Bobcats with six and five kills, respectively, as Banta, Haylee Leonard (Walburg, N.C.) and Haydn Beatty (Norman, Okla.) each tallied eight digs. Candace Niemiec (Huntington Beach, Calif.) posted team-highs of 14 assists and two aces.

Lydia Schellenberg led the way for Belmont Abbey with 10 kills, as her sister Hannah Schellenberg and Claire Lang added seven and six smashes, respectively. Ana Maria Pagan posted a match-high 10 digs, while Gabby Martinez and Abby Stine each tallied four service aces.

Belmont Abbey got off to a strong start in the contest, taking an early 10-3 lead following three straight aces from Martinez. The Crusaders would stretch the lead to 21-6 before the Bobcats answered with consecutive points, capping the spurt with a tandem block by Leonard and Angela Morse (Clinton Township, Mich.). The Abbey closed out the set with a 4-2 run that was highlighted by a kill from Caitlin Hankins.

Lees-McRae battled back in the second set, rallying from an early deficit to knot the score at 7-7 following an emphatic smash from Liscio. Belmont Abbey answered with a 9-4 run, taking a 16-11 lead on a Hannah Schellenberg kill before pushing the margin to 21-13 on the heels of a 5-0 spurt. The Abbey then capped the set with a smash by Lydia Schellenberg to claim a 2-0 advantage in the match.

The Bobcats continued to battle in the third, taking an early 5-4 lead on a kill from Leonard before the Crusaders responded with a 10-3 run, claiming a 14-8 advantage following a block by Hankins and Lydia Schellenberg. Lees-McRae would counter with a 5-1 spurt, closing the gap to 15-13 with a Liscio smash. Belmont Abbey answered with a 7-1 run of its own, pushing the margin to 22-14 following a kill from Lang before capping the set and the match with another smash by Lang.

Lees-McRae returns to the court on Sunday when the Bobcats travel to Wingate, N.C. to take on Wingate University in Southeast Region play at 3 p.m.