

## Bobcats Push Winning Streak To Four

Written by Whitney Noble

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Freshman Marvyn Rieger (Frankfurt, Germany) scored midway through the 26th minute, and Scott Alford (Hillsborough, N.C.) added a goal and an assist to lead the Lees-McRae College men's soccer team to a decisive 3-0 win over North Greenville University in Conference Carolinas play on Saturday evening. With the win, Lees-McRae (4-3, 2-0 CC) runs its winning streak to four matches while extending its shutout stretch to 293:52. The Bobcats controlled the run of play for much of the match, outshooting North Greenville (3-4, 1-1 CC) by a 17-4 margin, including a 13-1 advantage in the first half.

Rieger, Alford and Jordan Wright (West Lothian, Scotland) each found the back of the net to pace the Bobcats, as Matthew Cureton (Waxhaw, N.C.) and Alford added two and one assists, respectively. Thomas Rusling (Sheffield, England) posted his 17th career clean sheet, as Alford led the way for the Bobcats with six shots, including three on frame. Todd Johnston tallied the Crusader's lone shot on frame in the match, as DJ Baker made five saves between the pipes.

The Bobcats put the pressure on early, sending seven shots toward goal in the opening 20 minutes, including a glorious effort by Alford in the 19th that was pulled off the line by the Crusader defense. Baker made perhaps the save of the season in the 25th minute, tipping a long-distance effort from Andrew Shoemaker (Cary, N.C.) just over the bar.

Lees-McRae would break the deadlock less than a minute later, taking a 1-0 lead when Rieger banked the finish off the crossbar for his first collegiate goal after Alford's header from a Cureton corner struck the post, and fell right to Rieger on the doorstep.

The Bobcats were forced to deal with a bit of adversity midway through the 36th minute when one of their top attacking players was sent off, putting LMC down a man for the remainder of the match. Lee Squires' side would rise to the challenge, maintaining possession and control of play into the interval, as Rieger nearly produced the double with a brilliant headed effort in the 44th minute.

Rieger and the Bobcats came out of the break with a purpose, continuing to dictate the pace while aggressively cutting out each and every attacking push by the Crusaders. The Bobcats would receive some fortune of their own midway through the 75th minute, when freshman Alex Hasler (Browns Summit, N.C.) was hauled down in the box after a strong run in, giving Lees-McRae a chance from the spot.

Wright answered the call, burying the penalty with a driven strike for his fourth of the season and a 2-0 lead for the Bobcats. Alford capped the scoring three minutes later, nodding home a free header off a Cureton corner for his fourth of the campaign. Lees-McRae returns to the pitch on Thursday, October 3 when the Bobcats travel to Misenheimer, N.C. to take on Pfeiffer University in conference play at 4 p.m.

**Photo Courtesy: Scott Alford, LMC Athletics**