

Chambers nets 35, No.24 Livingstone Downs LMC

Written by Whitney Noble

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Freshman Mike Chambers (Winston-Salem, N.C.) poured in a game-high 35 points to pace the Lees-McRae College men's basketball team on Friday evening, as No. 24 Livingstone College rallied from a first-half deficit en route to a 102-82 victory on opening night of the Johnson C. Smith University Tip-off Classic.

Livingstone (2-0) posted a field goal percentage of 47.7 percent on the night, including a 52.6 percent clip in the first half, while holding Lees-McRae (3-1) to a mark of 39.3 percent in the contest. The Blue Bears won the battle on the glass by a 46-36 margin, including a 26-17 advantage on the defensive boards, as the Bobcats converted 14 Livingstone turnovers into 17 points.

Chambers led the way for the Bobcats with a game- and season-high 35 points, connecting on 10-of-15 attempts from the floor, 3-of-4 from downtown, and 12-of-14 at the free throw line in 28 minutes. Darryl Bond (Nashville, Tenn.) added 13 points and a game-high nine rebounds, while Chambers pulled down eight boards. Darius Smith (Woodbridge, Va.) chipped in nine points and a contest-best four assists.

Mark Thomas and Jody Hill paced the Blue Bears with 28 and 27 points, respectively, as Eric Dubose added 12 points and three assists. Hill tallied a game-high four steals while Emarri Bailey and Anthony Welch each pulled down eight rebounds.

Lees-McRae got off to a strong start in the first half, taking an early 9-2 lead on a jumper by Donte Falls (Shelby, N.C.) before Livingstone responded, going on a 28-10 run to open a 30-19 advantage with 9:20 to go following a Hill triple. Livingstone continued to push the tempo over the next several minutes, pushing the margin to 58-42 heading into the break after DeAndre Tillman (Charlotte, N.C.) and Bond closed the half with a dunk and a trey.

The Bobcats fought back in the second half, trimming the lead to 80-68 following the second of two trifectas by Chambers with 10:10 to go. Livingstone countered with a 14-2 run, widening the gap to 94-70 with a pair of free throws from Dubose at the 7:24 mark. The Bobcats would finish strong, outscoring the Blue Bears over the final seven minutes with a stretch that included a nifty lay-in by Smith.

Lees-McRae returns to the court on Saturday when the Bobcats take on host Johnson C. Smith at 4 p.m. on the final day of the Golden Bulls' Tip-off Classic.

Photo Courtesy: Mike Chambers, LMC Athletics