

Three Bobcats Named All-State

Written by Whitney Noble

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The Lees-McRae College women's soccer team has placed three players on the 2013 North Carolina Collegiate Sports Information Association all-State team, including first-team selection Meagan Thornton

(Millville, N.J.) and second-team honorees Sarah Mahar (Jacksonville, Fla.) and Kaitlyn Kerrigan (Fishers, Ind.), announced NCCSIA officials Monday.

The Bobcats and Belmont Abbey College paced the conference with three selections each, as Barton College earned two spots on the all-state team. Wingate University led the way with four honorees, as Lees-McRae, Belmont Abbey, and Lenoir-Rhyne University each earned three selections.

Lees-McRae (10-7-1, 8-1 Conference Carolinas) claimed the program's third consecutive Conference Carolinas regular season title this fall, earning the top overall seed in the league tournament for the third straight year on the heels of a 10-match unbeaten streak. The Bobcats enjoyed one of the best stretches of defensive play in program history during the streak, keeping eight straight clean sheets while not allowing a goal for more than 830 consecutive minutes.

Thornton earns NCCSIA all-State honors for the first time in her career, landing a spot on the

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first team after leading the team with eight goals, five assists, and 21 points this fall. The two-time all-Conference Carolinas selection earned a spot on the all-conference first team for the first time this season, and has tallied 22 goals, 14 assists and 58 points in her three-year career with the Bobcats. She has netted five match-winners to date, adding five multi-goal performances and a trio of hat tricks, including a first-half treble in a 4-0 victory over Erskine this season.

Kerrigan garners her first career NCCSIA honors with a spot on the second team, adding to her second straight all-Conference Carolinas First team selection with a career season. The Fishers, Ind. native tallied one goal and seven assists this fall, pushing her career total to 34 helpers, which ranks third on the program's all-time list. Kerrigan posted at least seven assists in each of her four seasons with the Bobcats, including a career-high 11 helpers in 2010.

Mahar adds to her trophy case with her first career NCCSIA all-state honors, earning a spot on the second team after garnering all-Conference Carolinas First team recognition for the second straight year. The Jacksonville, Fla. native has established herself as one of the most clutch goal-scorers in program history over the last two seasons with 11 of her 17 career goals proving to be the match-winner, a total which ranks fifth on the school's all-time list.

Lees-McRae is expected to return 19 letter-winners from this year's Conference Carolinas regular season championship squad, including rising seniors Ariana Smith (Jackson, N.J.), Kaitlyn Briggs (Oviedo, Fla.), and Thornton.

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Photo Courtesy: Kaitlyn Kerrigan, Meagan Thornton, Sarah Mahar, LMC Athletics