

Bobcats Maneuver Past St. Francis

Written by Chris Parker

Saturday, 25 January 2014 17:20

Lees-McRae sophomore Brady Markle and senior Matt Harpenau recorded double digit kills while the LMC men's volleyball team won a five-set thriller, 3-2, against St. Francis (PA) Saturday afternoon at Williams

Gymnasium in Banner Elk, N.C.

The Bobcats (2-1) finally got to play in front of the home crowd after weather postponed two midweek matches while senior Randy Ramirez (Guaynabo, Puerto Rico) racked up 44 assists in the win. The Red Flash (2-2) charged back from a two sets to none deficit to force a fifth set, but struggled hitting a -.167 in the deciding set.

LMC dominated the first set as it led wire-to-wire. Following a SFU timeout, Ramirez connected on one of his five kills before Harpenau (Cincinnati, Ohio) delivered an ace to give the home squad a 14-8 lead.

Senior Sam Sheers (Centerville, Ohio) followed suit with an ace of his own before Markle (York, Pa.) smashed one of his game-high 23 kills to extend the lead to seven, 17-10.

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The Red Flash was unable to cut into the deficit while LMC won the first set, 25-17. The Bobcats hit an impressive .591 mark while Ramirez had 12 assists.

Consecutive kills from Markle and Harpenau gave the Bobcats a bit of breathing room in the second set to spark an 8-2 run while LMC took the second set, 25-19.

SFU controlled the third set when it took a 20-10 lead after four different players recorded a kill.

LMC made it interesting with a 7-2 run to make it 22-17, but a Logan Patterson kill gave the Red Flash the set victory, 25-18.

The fourth set was a see-saw battle while another Patterson kill gave SFU a 10-8 advantage. The Red Flash would lead the rest of the way despite not seeing their lead grow past four.

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LMC owned the fifth set by jumping out to an 11-5 lead following consecutive kills from Ramirez and Markle. Markle sealed the Bobcat victory by delivering a service ace.

The Bobcats hit .462 in the deciding set and better than .400 in their three victorious sets. Harpenau finished with 15 kills while Josh Cothron (Bradenton, Fla.), John Lucas (Cincinnati, Ohio) and Ramirez had five kills apiece.

Lucas Behringer paced both squads with nine digs while the Red Flash hit .262 on the day.

LMC returns to action when it travels to St. Charles, Mo. to participate in the Lindenwood Men's Classic Friday evening. The Bobcats battle Quincy at 6 p.m. before taking on host Lindenwood at 8:30 p.m.

Photo Courtesy: □ Matt Harpenau, LMC Athletics