

Bobcats Run Win Streak to Eight

Written by Whitney Noble

Saturday, 19 October 2013 22:25

Sophomore Sarah Mahar (Jacksonville, Fla.) and senior Kaitlyn Kerrigan (Lakewood Ranch, Fla.) scored less than five minutes apart late in the second half to lead the Lees-McRae College women's soccer

team to a 2-0 win over Limestone College in Conference Carolinas play on Saturday afternoon, pushing the Bobcats' win streak to eight matches.

The victory also marks Lees-McRae's (9-6, 7-1 CC) sixth straight clean sheet, stretching the Bobcats' shutout streak to 580:17. With the win, Lees-McRae also clinches a top-half finish in the conference standings, needing either a victory over Mount Olive College next Saturday, or a loss or draw by Belmont Abbey College in one of the Crusaders' final two matches to secure its third straight league title.

Lees-McRae won the match despite a 9-8 disadvantage in shots, outshooting Limestone (4-6-3, 2-3-2 CC) by an 8-5 margin through the first 75 minutes of the match, as the Saints held a narrow 4-3 edge in corner kicks.

Kaitlyn Briggs (Oviedo, Fla.) continued her climb up the program's all-time rankings, keeping her 20th career clean sheet to move within on shutout of a tie for the school record. The victory also puts her into a tie for fourth in career wins (28) while her two saves move her into sixth on

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the program's all-time list.

Mahar paced the Bobcats with her second straight match-winner and fifth of the season, moving into a tie for fifth in program history with 10 decisive strikes. Kerrigan added her first goal of the campaign, while Erin Barcal (Wilmington, N.C.) chipped in her second career assist.

Gabriella Reid led the way for Limestone with seven shots, including two on frame, as Mariette Martinez made four saves between the pipes.

The teams battled to a scoreless first half, combining for just three attempts on frame, with two of those efforts coming from Phenix Durham (Waxhaw, N.C.) and Sydney Maddox (Asheville, N.C.) in the 26th and 44th minutes, respectively.

After Meagan Thornton (Millville, N.J.) elicited a skillful stop from Martinez in the 58th minute, the Bobcats snatched a 1-0 advantage midway through the 71st, when Mahar got on the end of a cross from Barcal and tapped the finish into the open net from close range.

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Kerrigan would double the lead to 2-0 late in the 75th minute, firing a loose ball from 30 yards out over the outstretched keeper, and into the top corner following a sliding challenge by Thornton to win possession.

The Saints pushed forward in search of an answer goal over the final 15 minutes, outshooting the Bobcats by a 4-0 margin including a trio of efforts by Reid. Briggs and the Bobcats were equal to the task, closing down the Limestone attack to preserve the clean sheet.

Lees-McRae returns to the pitch on Saturday, October 26 when the Bobcats travel to Mount Olive, N.C. to close out their conference regular season schedule against Mount Olive at 4 p.m.

Photo Courtesy: Sarah Mahar, LMC Athletics