

# Loyola Women's Volleyball ECU Tournament Recap

Ramblers collect a weekend sweep to move to 5-2

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Sophomore Maureen Carls made her presence felt early and often on her way to tournament MVP honors. She collected 34 total kills, including a career high 17 in the team's first match, and chipped in 12 blocks over the course of the two-day event in Greenville, N.C.

Carls couldn't have picked a better time for her career-topping performance, as the Ramblers needed every last kill to hang onto a five-set victory against Morgan State University (MSU).

Carls registered five kills as Loyola closed out the opening set 25-19. The Ramblers turned up the pressure on defense and breezed to a 25-11 second-set victory while only allowing two kills by the Morgan State Bears.

But the tide began to shift as the Bears used a clutch block to seal a hard-fought 25-23 victory in the third set. Loyola and MSU battled to a tie seven times early in the fourth set, but the Bears ended up pulling away for a 25-18 win to set up a decisive fifth set.

Playing to a fifth set for the third time in their first five matches, the Ramblers found a way to gut out a 15-10 victory to secure the win.

Two costly errors by the Bears down the stretch were too much to overcome, and Loyola capitalized by posting a .375 attack percentage (8 kills, 2 errors, 16 attacks) after struggling mightily through sets three and four.

Morgan State dropped to 0-4 on the season while Loyola improved to 3-2.

"I am extremely proud of the resiliency that we showed in the fifth set and our ability to keep working together to grind it out," Head Coach Chris Muscat said.

The path to victory was decidedly easier on day two of the tournament, which featured matches against the Citadel Bulldogs and tournament host East Carolina Pirates.

The Bulldogs scored the first point but never held a lead for the rest of the match as the Ramblers breezed to a three-set sweep.

Citadel faded early and couldn't manage to regroup. The team dropped each successive set by a bigger margin (25-18, 25-11, 25-5) as they fell to 0-5 to start their campaign.

Loyola posted a season high .381 attack percentage, (42 kills-10 errors-84 attempts) for the match while holding the Citadel to a season low .011 (17-18-90).

Carls collected eight more kills and six blocks, but Loyola used a team effort to push its record to 4-2. Freshman Morgan Reardon led the team with 12 kills and was one of six Ramblers to post four or more digs in the match.

“It was a great all-around effort today,” Muscat said. “Everyone on the team found positive ways to contribute and that is exactly what we are going to need.”

It was deja vu all over again for the Ramblers later Saturday night, as Reardon once again led the team in kills on the Ramblers’ way to a victory over East Carolina in three sets.

The Pirates made a strong early push to defend their home court, as they erased an early five-point deficit and eventually tied the first set at 21. But an ace by sophomore Brittany Brown preceded another clutch kill from Carls, and Loyola took the first set 25-21.

The Ramblers held a 24-18 lead in the second set only to watch the Pirates reel off six straight points and draw even. But, like clockwork, Carls came up with yet another kill to push Loyola in front. A service error by the Pirates sealed the set, 26-24 in favor of the Ramblers.

East Carolina held an early lead in the third set only to allow Loyola to go on a six-point streak of its own to take a 10-7 lead they’d never relinquish. Reardon’s 16th kill put the nail in the coffin for the Pirates as the Ramblers capped the tournament with seven straight winning sets.

The Ramblers climbed to 5-2 while the Pirates dropped to 2-4.

Reardon finished the match one dig short of her first college double-double, while sophomore Libero Stephanie Kinane recorded a season high 26 digs. Both players joined Carls on the all-tournament team.

The Ramblers will try to continue their hot streak when they head to South Bend, Ind., for the Shamrock Invitational Friday, Sept. 13. They’ll open play at 6 p.m. Friday against the Fighting Irish before squaring off against both Auburn and Oakland on Saturday, Sept. 14.