

Volleyball Upsets No. 21 Oklahoma

Blue Raiders improve to 5-0 for first time since 1995

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Sophomore Ashley Mead registered 19 kills while junior Ashley Adams added 15 kills and senior Alicia Lemau'u had 13 digs, helping Middle Tennessee to a 3-0 victory (30-19, 42-40, 30-22) over 21st-ranked Oklahoma Friday night at the Idaho Invitational in Moscow, Idaho. Mead led all players with her 19 kills, tying her career-high set last Sunday at Iowa State. The Newnan, Ga., native posted her 19 winners in just 41 chances for a .317 hitting percentage. The Blue Raiders improved to 5-0 overall, the program's best start since reeling off eight consecutive wins to begin the season in 1995. Adams had 15 kills on only 22 opportunities and Ashley Asberry added 11 kills on 15 chances in the victory. Lemau'u posted her fifth straight contest with double-digit digs, while Adams and Leslie Clark both collected nine digs. Clark also had her fourth 50-plus assist evening with exactly 50 helpers. It was



also the sophomore's sixth 50-plus effort in the last seven matches dating to last season. Middle Tennessee controlled the match early, limiting the Sooners to a .086 hitting percentage in the first game en route to a 30-19 triumph. The second game was a battle of will that included 26 ties and 13 lead changes before the Blue Raiders prevailed, 42-40. Middle Tennessee posted a .387 hitting percentage in the final game for a 30-22 match-clinching victory. "We played extremely, extremely well. We had a very good match all around," head coach Matt Peck said. "We were pretty balanced. [Oklahoma] really concentrated on Quanshell Scott and blocked her well, but that opened up other

opportunities, especially for Ashley Mead, and we were able to capitalize on that. "We also passed extremely well and played very good defense, which allows us to score points on good teams and that's exactly what happened." Peck called the second game a marathon, one his team had very few chances to win until the very end. "[Oklahoma] had many opportunities to win it and we didn't really lead until the very end. But that was another chance for us to play from behind, which we're doing very well this year. Our seniors and other upper classmen are playing well in those circumstances, but so are our young players and we'll have four or five on the court at the same time," Peck said. "Right now we're road tested, but we have to continue to play aggressively in our other matches this weekend and for the rest of the year, go after teams like they're ranked ahead us." Oklahoma was the 13th seed in last year's NCAA Tournament, making the Sweet 16 before falling to Final Four participant UCLA. The Sooners had not lost a game this season before Friday, including knocking off Alabama last weekend at home. "We talked to our team before the match about the fact that we were not just playing Oklahoma but also the teams on their schedule like Alabama and Denver, who are both in our region. Every time we beat a team that beat an SEC team, then that really helps us because that's who we're battling for NCAA spots at the end of the year," Peck said. Middle Tennessee takes on host Idaho at 2:30 p.m. CT and then Oregon State at 7 p.m. on Saturday to conclude the tournament.

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