

Raiders Stay Undefeated with 3-1 Victory

Adams leads three players in double figures with 21 kills

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Ashley Adams collected 21 kills, including 14 in the final two games, leading three Middle Tennessee players in double figures in a 3-1 triumph (30-20, 30-25, 32-34, 30-22) over Georgia State Friday night in the Blue Raider Bash at Alumni Memorial Gym. The Blue Raiders worked harder than they wanted to against a very game Panthers squad, but Adams and Quanshell Scott were the big factors in the final two games. Adams collected 10 kills in the third game, including six in an eight point run by Middle Tennessee, and Scott had 13 kills and nine blocks for the match. Adams said she wasn't holding anything back in the third game. "There are just sometimes where everything feels on," Adams said. "At that point, we had nothing to lose and I was going to hit every ball as hard as I could. I wasn't really worried about getting errors or getting blocked."



Izabela Kozon also added 12 kills and Ashley Asberry, who struggled in the early part of the match, finished with eight blocks, and Adams also registered eight blocks. With the victory Middle Tennessee improved to 9-0 on the season, the best start in school history. Head coach Matt Peck said the team's passing was so-so in the match and needs to improve for the team to be successful. "[The passing] wasn't awful, but we have to be a deceptive team," Peck said. "We're not a tall team but we're an athletic team. To take advantage of that, we have to be in system, meaning the setter has the ball at the net in the middle of the net so she can choose who to set. When we're not passing well, she has to force the sets and the other team sets their defense up and it doesn't work for us." The Blue Raiders struggled in the early part of Game One and Georgia State took

advantage. Scott had a big kill and then combined with Ashley Mead for a block. Kozon had another kill, and Scott and Leslie Clark paired for another block and a 9-5 Middle Tennessee lead. Scott had another kill and then served an ace, but the Panthers scored seven of the next eight points for a 13-12 advantage. The Blue Raiders answered with five consecutive points, starting with an Adams kill and a Mead and Asberry block. Middle Tennessee pulled away late the game after a Mead kill, a quick kill from setter Clark and kills from Scott and Kozon. Clark served an ace before GSU had a hitting error, giving the Blue Raiders a 30-20 win in Game One. The Panthers again hung tough in the second game and pushed the Blue Raiders to the limit. Scott and Asberry had early kills and Adams added a pair of kills for a 12-10 Middle Tennessee advantage. But GSU tied the game at 13 and the teams traded the lead back-and-forth, with the Panthers taking an 18-17 advantage. But Middle Tennessee answered with nine of the next 12 points, including a kill from Kozon to start the run. Adams had two kills and Sasha McGlothin added a kill before Mead and Adams had back-to-back kills. Scott and Adams combined for a block before a Scott kill gave the Blue Raiders a 26-21 advantage. But the Panthers answered once again, winning four of the next five points to cut the Middle Tennessee lead to 27-25, but Kozon had a kill before Scott's ace gave the Blue Raiders a 30-25 victory in Game Two. Adams and Scott had early kills in the third game, but the Panthers answered with nine straight points, taking an 11-3 lead and prompting a timeout by Peck. He took his starters into the hallway for a private meeting that changed the momentum. Kozon started the rally with a kill and Asberry followed with another, but Georgia State made it a slow and winding road back into the game. Adams said Peck left it up to the rest of the team to pick up their play in the third game. "[Coach] didn't really say much. What do you say to that? We just fell apart," Adams said. "He kind of left it up to us to pick it up. We knew we had to come back out and improve our play." The Blue Raiders finally broke through late in the game behind Adams, who had 10 kills in the game and six during an eight-point Middle Tennessee run that gave the home team a 27-24 lead. But the Panthers continued to battle and rallied with five out of six points. Kozon's kill tied the match at 30, but a pair of blocks by GSU gave the visitors a 34-32 Game Three victory. In the fourth game, Adams picked up where she left off with two more kills and Kozon added a pair of aces for an early lead. Asberry and Adams combined on a block and another Kozon ace gave Middle Tennessee a 16-7 advantage. Adams added two more kills and Scott got into the act with two of her own for a 22-13 lead. Mead and Asberry had a block and Scott and Adams posted another block before Mead's final kill afforded the Blue Raiders a 30-22 Game Four victory. The Blue Raider Bash continues with four matches Saturday. Middle Tennessee plays at 1 p.m. against UT-Arlington. The Blue Raiders also host Missouri State Sunday at 4 p.m. at Alumni Memorial Gym.

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