Blue Raiders Clinch NCAA Bid with 3-0 Win Over WKU

Mead and Adams knock down 16 kills

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DENVER, Colo. - Junior Ashley Adams and sophomore Ashley Mead each had 16 kills to lead the Blue Raiders to a 3-0 (34-32, 34-32, 30-20) win over Western Kentucky to clinch the title match and an automatic bid to the NCAA tournament. Adams posted a hitting percentage of .433 while Mead had a hitting percentage of .375. Adams also added assistance on defense with 10 digs and four block assists. Mead had six digs and three block assists in the match. "It was a great match. Western Kentucky played us great the first two games and I think in game three we relaxed a little bit which I think we needed to do. We played pretty much an error free match today and yesterday and I think that is what won us the match," head coach Matt Peck said. Also guiding the Blue Raiders (32-2) to victory were junior Ashley Asberry, senior Quanshell Scott and freshman Izabela Kozon. Asberry had six kills with nine block assists while Scott had six kills with three block assists and Kozon who knocked down six kills with two block assists. "Obviously, Ashley Adams, Ashley Mead, Quan, Ashley Asberry and Izabela Kozon all contributed to this outstanding effort. I am just so proud of this team. A very young team out there, three sophomores and a freshman outside and I am just very proud of our girls." The Blue Raiders had seven less kills than Western Kentucky in the match knocking down a total of 53 for a .354 hitting percentage. The Lady Toppers Megan Argabright knocked down 21 kills for a .529 hitting percentage and had four block assists. Aquilla Orr posted 11 kills in the match. Sophomore Leslie Clark had 40 assists in the match and also posted seven digs, three block assists and three kills. Adams was named Most Outstanding Player in the Tournament while Clark and Scott were named to the All-Tournament team. The two teams traded points to begin the match but the Blue Raiders took an early two-point lead, 7-5. Then Western Kentucky tied the game at eight and pulled away to a two-point lead, 13-11. After Middle Tennessee tied the score at 13, the two teams continued to trade points with neither taking more than a one-point lead, 19-18 WKU. The Blue Raiders took a 23-22 lead after a block by Adams. Then Middle Tennessee

extended that lead to three after a kill by Mead, 25-22. Western Kentucky took a time out and then scored four straight points to take a 26-25 lead. Kozon had two big kills late in the match to keep the Blue Raiders alive. Then the two teams traded points again knotting the score at 30 after a kill by Scott. Middle Tennessee took the 34-32 win on a block by Clark and Asberry. The Blue Raiders trailed 32-31 before scoring three straight behind the serve of Scott for the win. Asberry had five block assists in game one to lead the Blue Raiders defensively. Mead led the team on offense with five kills followed by Scott and Kozon with four kills each. Game two started off much like game one with the two teams trading points back and forth. Then Western Kentucky took a four-point lead, 9-5 but the Blue Raiders continued to battle getting the score within two, 16-14. The Lady Toppers pulled ahead again extending their lead to five, 23-18. Middle Tennessee went on a four-point streak to knot the score at 26. The Blue Raiders tied it up again at 29 after a block by Adams and Asberry. Trailing 32-31 just like in game one, the Blue Raiders scored three straight including a service ace by Scott to take the game 34-32 and a 2-0 lead in the match. At the break, Mead led the Blue Raiders with 12 kills followed by Adams with 10. Scott was 6 for 9 posting a .556 hitting percentage with one service ace and three block assists. For Western Kentucky, Argabright had a hitting percentage of .560 with 12 kills and four block assists. Two teams traded points to begin game three but pulled ahead by three after kills from Adams and Mead, 10-7. The Blue Raiders extended their lead to six-points after a kill by Kozon, 15-9. Middle Tennessee continued to put up points while keeping the Lady Toppers from scoring, 20-13. The Blue Raiders scored five straight to take a late 11-point lead, 27-16. Middle Tennessee will be back in action on Friday, Nov. 23 when it plays host to UAB at 7 p.m. Admission to all home volleyball matches is free. A live broadcast of the match will be available on www.goblueraiders.com.

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