

Blue Raiders Fall to BYU 3-0

Loss comes in round of 16 but not before posting the best record in school history

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STATE COLLEGE, Penn. -

The dream season came to an end for Middle Tennessee on Friday night as the Blue Raiders fell 3-0 (30-28, 30-22, 34-32) to Brigham Young in the semi-final match of the Penn State Regional. The Blue Raiders kept BYU from match point four times but also lost a chance to force a fourth game three times. Middle Tennessee ends the season with just three losses at 35-3 as BYU improves to 24-7 and advances to the regional final. The loss also ends the Blue Raiders 14-match win streak. "We had a lot of balls hit the floor which I think should have gone up. We also had a game plan which went out the window for some reason in the first part of the match. We are not sure what happened. We started to stick to it in game three but by that time it was too late," head coach Matt Peck said. Junior Ashley Adams and freshman Izabela Kozon led the Blue Raiders on Friday night with 11 kills each.



The pair was followed by junior Ashley Asberry who added eight kills and sophomore Ashley Mead with seven. "I know this is probably the biggest match we have ever played but I don't really see any need for our team to have been nervous. We still have a young team but they haven't shown me that all year so I am a little surprised by that. Hopefully we will be back in the future playing in the regionals and hopefully have a different outcome," Peck said. Middle Tennessee posted a hitting percentage of .215 with 49 kills while the Cougars notch more kills with 56 for a .333 hitting

percentage. "We had an opportunity to win game one. We missed a serve and had a double hit that would have been the game right there. We also had many opportunities in game three. I'm not sure what happened. I am disappointed," Peck said. "We had a great season this year but I don't think BYU is a better team than us. I just think we didn't have enough players show up to play tonight. I think had we played a match like we did against Hawai'i last weekend we would still be playing right now or be close to it." BYU also out blocked the Blue Raiders who had just eight and a half total blocks to the Cougars' 11.5. Sophomores Leslie Clark and Sasha McGlothin each had three block assists to lead the team at the net. Clark posted 35 assists in the match to add depth offensively. Middle Tennessee did out dig the Cougars with 37 digs led by senior Alicia Lemau'u with 11. BYU had 33 digs in the match. The Blue Raiders run in the NCAA Tournament is the furthest any Middle Tennessee team has ever been with many teams making the second round but not advancing to the round of 16. The two schools traded points to begin game one with neither taking more than a one-point lead until the Blue Raiders pulled ahead by two, 10-8. BYU continued to battle knotting the score at 14 and then allowed Middle Tennessee just one more point while taking a four-point lead, 19-15. BYU extended its lead but the Blue Raiders battled cutting the lead to two, 23-21. Middle Tennessee continued to fight and won three straight points to keep BYU from winning game one, 29-28, but it was not enough as the Cougars pulled it out 30-28 to take a 1-0 lead in the match. Mead and Kozon lead the team at the end of game one with four kills each followed by Scott with three. For the Cougars, Goodman led the team with six kills followed by Porter with four. Game two began much the same way game one ended as BYU jumped out to a four-point lead, 5-1. The Cougars maintained a three-point lead but the Blue Raiders continued to battle, 8-5. BYU extended its lead to five as Middle Tennessee would only score four-points, 14-9. BYU continued to dominate in game two as it took an eight-point lead, 23-15. While the Blue Raiders continued to fight BYU never wavered notching block after block to take a 28-21 lead. The Cougars then with a 30-22 win BYU took a 2-0 lead in the match going into the intermission. At the intermission, Goodman led the Cougars with 14 kills for a .417 hitting percentage. Kozon led the Blue Raiders at the break with eight kills followed by Asberry with six. BYU also out blocked Middle Tennessee seven and a half to four led by Dyer with five block assists. Six Middle Tennessee players each had one block assists with McGlothin posting the only solo block for the Blue Raiders in the match. Waugh started game three with a service ace to give the Blue Raiders a 1-0 lead. Then took an 8-5 lead on a kill by Mead. Behind the serve of Lemau'u the Blue Raiders extended their lead to eight, 13-5, winning eight straight points. Middle Tennessee maintained its lead by holding the Cougars to just five-points, 18-10. BYU continued to battle as it cut the lead to two, 21-19. BYU continued to threaten but the Blue Raiders kept a two-point lead thanks to a kill by Adams, 24-22 but then the Cougars tied the game at 24.

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