Volleyball clinches win over Xavier 3-2

Blue Raiders pull out tight match in team effort

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CINCINNATI, Ohio - Senior Ashley Asberry scored three of Middle Tennessee last five points to seal a 3-2 win over Xavier on Friday night. Asberry ended the night with13 kills as she hit .423 in the match. Junior Ashley Mead led Middle Tennessee (10-1) at the net with 14 kills with four block assists. Defensively, Asberry had a career high three solo blocks and added seven block assists. "I was very proud of the team tonight. I don't think this was one of our best played matches but this was a very good team. They were an at-large in the NCAA tournament a year ago and one of Dayton's two losses last year. We played well when we needed to especially after last night's disaster for us to come back and put together a good match against a very good team I was very proud," head coach Matt Peck said. Sophomore Izabela Kozon notched 11 kills on the night and added five block assists on the defensive side of the ball. Freshman Lindsey Cheatham added nine kills of her own on the night as she hit .375 with three block assists. Xavier's Kelly Ruth recorded 20 kills on the night with a .269 hitting percentage with Lauren Kaminsky adding assistance with 14 kills of her own. As a team, the Blue Raiders had 58 kills with six service aces, 56 digs and 16 team blocks. "We have another tough match on Sunday in Tulane and this little thing we ran into in last night's match, and whatever it was, I think we are back on the rebound I am very excited about that," Peck said. Middle Tennessee began the match by trading points with Xavier before taking a six-point lead, 15-9 at the halfway mark. The Musketeers closed the gap to one late in the set, 22-21, and the Blue Raiders staged a rally but Xavier tied the set at 24. The Blue Raiders held on to defeat Xavier 26-24 on an attack error by the Musketeers. Middle Tennessee led by as many as seven early in the second set but Xavier

came calling once again making it a one-point battle, 15-14. The Musketeers then pulled ahead and took control of the match with a 24-22 lead. Kozon had a kill and a block assist to tie the match at 24 but the Blue Raiders could not hold on as Xavier took a 26-24 win to tie the match at 1 and force a fourth set. After two sets, the Blue Raiders were ahead of Xavier in kills, hitting percentage and blocks. Middle Tennessee had 28 kills and seven team blocks compared to Xavier with 25 kills and five blocks. Mead lead the Blue Raiders at the net after two sets with eight kills and two block assists. Middle Tennessee led the second set, 6-2, before Xavier took control of the set winning 10 of the next 11 points for an 11-8 lead. The Blue Raiders continued to battle and after trading points back and forth tied the game at 17. Xavier took the lead once again as critical errors cost the Blue Raiders allowing the Musketeers to win the third set 25-19 and take a 2-1 lead in the match. Middle Tennessee took control of the fourth set after trading points back and forth taking a 17-9 lead over the Musketeers. The Blue Raiders held forcing a fifth set with their 25-18 win. Headed into the fifth set, the Blue Raiders had 51 kills with 15 team blocks as it held Xavier to 47 kills and nine blocks. Mead continued to lead the charge with her 14 kills followed by Kozon with 10. Middle Tennessee performed well in the fifth set and lead 8-5 at the eight-point break. Trailing 12-8 to the Blue Raiders, Xavier called a time out to regroup. The Blue Raiders took the win 15-10 on a service error by Xavier. The Blue Raiders will have Saturday off before facing Tulane at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 21 at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio.

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