Blue Raiders fall 3-2 to Green Wave

Asberry guides team in hard fought match

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Cincinnati, Ohio - Middle Tennessee battled Tulane on Sunday but could not pull out the win falling 3-2 as the match came down to the wire. The Blue Raiders (10-2) won the race to eight in the fifth set taking a 7-6 lead on a kill by Asberry and then making it 8-6 after an attack error by Tulane (8-4). Middle Tennessee continued to play well and took an 11-8 lead after a kill by freshman Stacy Oladinni and a block by Oladinni and freshman Lindsey Cheatham. After taking a time out, the Green Wave would score four unanswered points to take a 12-11 lead. Middle Tennessee and Tulane continued to battle and with the match tied at 14 the Green Wave pulled out a 16-14 win taking the match on a service ace. "We had many opportunities to win the match especially in game 5 and an experienced team like Tulane capitalized on our mistakes," head coach Matt Peck said. Senior Ashley Asberry guided the Blue Raiders throughout the match ending the day with a career high 20 kills and just one attack error for a .760 hitting percentage. Defensively the Murfreesboro, Tenn., native had five block assists which all came in sets four and five. As a team, Middle Tennessee had 60 kills for a .227 hitting percentage with 60 digs and 13 blocks. Tulane had 58 kills for a .208 hitting percentage with 57 digs and 11 blocks as a team. Junior Ashley Mead added assistance with her 15 kills and one solo block and two block assists. Oladinni ended the day with seven kills and four block assists as most of her kills came at crucial times in the match. This is the first non-3-0 match the Blue Raiders have lost since Sept. 9, 2007 when Middle Tennessee fell to Missouri State 3-1. Middle Tennessee lead Tulane throughout the first set with the Green Wave keeping it close but the Blue Raiders won the race to the halfway point leading 16-13. The Blue Raiders continued to perform well taking the first set by a score of 25-19. Middle Tennessee trailed by two most of the set after tying only to fall behind again as Tulane led 15-13 at the halfway mark. The Green Wave began to pull ahead as Middle Tennessee had a hard time catching up. Tulane tied the match at one all after taking the second set 25-18. After two sets the two teams were both hitting .281 but Tulane had seven more kills than the Blue Raiders. Middle Tennessee did have four team blocks to the Green Wave's two after being led by Mead with one solo and two block assists. The Blue Raiders began the third set

slowly as Tulane took an early 8-4 lead. Tulane would go on a 6-1 run increasing the lead 14-5 midway through the set. Middle Tennessee began to close the gap thanks to three kills by Oladinni and a block by Oladinni and Yancey making the score 22-17. The Blue Raiders continued to get big points but could not even the score falling 25-22 as Tulane took a 2-1 lead in the match. Asberry had 12 kills in 15 attempts with no errors for a .800 hitting percentage after three sets. The Blue Raiders rebounded to begin the third set and led Tulane 14-9 midway through the set. Tulane tied the set at 21 but the Blue Raiders took control and won the set 25-21 on a block by Clark and Asberry. Headed into the fifth set, Asberry had just one error with 16 kills for a .750 hitting percentage. Defensively, she had four block assists in the fourth set after not netting a block in the previous three sets. As a team, Middle Tennessee had 51 kills and 11 blocks while the Green Wave had 48 kills with 10 blocks as a team. In sets three and four, the Blue Raiders had 10 more kills than Tulane but the Green Wave. The Blue Raiders will have the rest of the week off to prepare for the opening of conference play on Friday, Sept. 26. Middle Tennessee will play rival Western Kentucky at 7 p.m. in Bowling Green, Ky.

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