

October 4, 2009

FIU tops Blue Raiders 3-1

Oladinni knocks down 15 kills; Defense has 12 blocks

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MIAMI - Middle Tennessee lost a hard fought battle to Florida International 3-1 (20-25, 29-27, 20-25, 24-26) on Sunday afternoon.

The Blue Raiders (9-7) posted 59 kills in the match, three more than FIU, for a .263 attack percentage. The Golden Panthers (14-2) posted a .221 hitting percentage but service errors proved to be the deciding factor in the match.

Middle Tennessee had 14 service errors and no service aces while FIU had just five service errors and six service aces.

"I am very disappointed that on paper we won but on floor we lost. We had a number of opportunities to get to game five and on a number of those occasions didn't take advantage of it. For us to outplay the 14 RPI team in the country at their place and walk away with a loss is hard to fathom," head coach Matt Peck said.

Middle Tennessee's block at the net stayed on fire as it had in its previous three matches with 12 total. Junior Izabala Kozon, senior **Janay Yancey** and sophomore Lindsay Cheatham each had four block assists.

FIU had just 6.5 blocks as a team with setter Natalia Valentin having the most blocks on the team with three.

Sophomore **Stacy Oladinni** posted a team high 15 kills while senior **Ashley Mead** and Kozon added 14 and 13 respectively to the Blue Raider arsenal. Oladinni posted a .379 attack percentage in the match while Kozon hit .300.

In just her fourth match of the season FIU's Yarimar Rosa posted 19 kills for a .325 hitting percentage. Olga Vergun also guided the Golden Panther offense with 15 kills of her own.

The Blue Raider backcourt also did a good job of staying in system as senior **Ashley Waugh** notched 15 digs while freshman **Halie Vannoy** had 12. Middle Tennessee had 48 total digs in the match.

The Blue Raiders tried to keep the opening set close but FIU took a 15-12 lead at the halfway point and never looked back. Middle Tennessee pulled to within three-points, 21-16 but could not hold on as the Golden Panthers took a 25-20 win.

The two teams battled in the second set and were tied at 13 halfway through. Middle Tennessee kept fighting and with the set tied at 25 went into extra points. The two teams traded points but the Blue Raiders held on until the end for a 29-27 win and tied the set at 1 apiece at the break.

FIU took a four-point lead, 11-7, early in the third set. The Golden Panthers kept control of



Sophomore Stacy Oladinni posted a team high 15 kills with a .379 hitting percentage against FIU on Sunday. (Bradley Lambert)

the set and while the Blue Raiders battled could not get any closer than four-points late in the set, 21-17.

Middle Tennessee regrouped during the three minute break and came back strong in the fourth set. The two teams traded points back and fourth and were tied at 12 at the halfway mark.

The Blue Raiders put together a four-point rally to close the gap to two-points, 22-20. Middle Tennessee continued to fight tying the set at 24. A kill by Rosa hands the Golden Panthers a 26-24 set win and the match.

At the break, Middle Tennessee had 29 kills for a .241 hitting percentage while the Golden Panthers had a .139 attack percentage with 25 kills.

The Blue Raiders return to Alumni Memorial Gym on Oct. 9 at 7 p.m. when it plays host to Arkansas State. Middle Tennessee will have Saturday off before facing Arkansas-Little Rock at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 11. Live video along with live stats will be available for Friday's match with the Red Wolves as linked on goblueraiders.com. Live audio and stats will be available against the Trojans also linked on goblueraiders.com.

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