Blue Raiders Blank South Alabama 3-0; Earn No. 2 Seed in SBC Tourney

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Middle Tennessee volleyball (26-3, 10-2 SBC) closed out the regular season with a 3-0 (30-17, 31-29, 30-22) blanking of South Alabama (9-18, 2-11 SBC) Sunday in Alumni Memorial Gym.

- **Video:** Conference Championship Promo

The Blue Raiders bounced back after the heartbreaking loss to Western Kentucky on Friday November 11, ending the regular season on a high note. With the win over South Alabama, Middle Tennessee notched a few firsts for the program. The 10 wins in the Sun Belt is the most in school history, and with the victory over the Jaguars, the Blue Raiders are assured a No. 2 seed in the upcoming Sun Belt Tournament, the highest seed the team has ever earned in the Sun Belt.

"It was our goal at the beginning of the season to play well and get a high seed in the tournament," said Head Coach Matt Peck. "We took care of business all season to get to where we are today, and now we have to play one match at a time in the tournament and hopefully reach the finals next Saturday."

Middle Tennessee will face No. 7 seed Arkansas State in the first round of the Sun Belt Championships Thursday. Match time is tentatively set for 5 p.m. in the Alumni Memorial Gym.

Alicia Lemau'u recorded another record-breaking performance. With 15 digs against South Alabama, she improved her season digs total to 520, which breaks the single season record of 508, a mark Lemau'u broke as a freshman in 2004.

Middle Tennessee came out with a dominating presence in the first game against South Alabama. The Blue Raiders hit a scorching .319 and held the Jaguars to a .000 attack percentage and had a 10-1 run to start the game.

South Alabama came back in game two and had the Blue Raiders on their heels. Late in game two there were three ties until the Jaguars pulled ahead with game point 29-28. The

Blue Raiders fought back, tying the game at 29 thanks to a kill by Quanshell Scott. Junior setter Megan Sumrell gave Middle Tennessee the lead, 30-29, with a kill and then the Blue Raiders took game two off an error by South Alabama.

In game three, Middle Tennessee kept its focus. The Blue Raiders held South Alabama to a .143 attack percentage and closed out the game and the match off a kill by Scott.

Scott, a sophomore middle blocker, had career-high 15 kills in the match and also notched eight block assists. Junior Andressa Lyra completes the regular season by recording double figure kills in all 29 matches this season, as she had 10 kills against South Alabama. Freshman Ashley Adams added 11 kills in the match.

Prior to the match, Middle Tennessee senior Evi Gargalianos was honored. Gargalianos is the lone senior on the squad this season.

2005 TOURNAMENT PAIRINGS (all times central)

THURSDAY, Nov. 17
12 p.m. No. 1 WKU vs. No. 8 Troy
2:30 p.m. No. 4 UALR vs. No. 5 North Texas
5 p.m. No. 2 MT vs. No. 7 ASU
7:30 p.m. No. 3 Denver vs. No. 6 FIU

FRIDAY, Nov. 18
5 p.m. WKU-TROY winner vs. UALR-UNT winner
7:30 p.m. MT-ASU winner vs. DU-FIU winner

SATURDAY, Nov. 19
2:30 p.m. Championship match (SBC Regional TV)

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