Middle Tennessee defeats Southern Miss in five-set thriller

Blue Raiders will face Auburn tonight at 7 PM

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - After going into the break with a two set lead, the Middle Tennessee volleyball team overcame a dramatic comeback effort from Southern Miss to secure a 3-2 (25-21, 25-16, 23-25, 23-25, 15-10) win in their second match of the Blue Raider Bash. "I expected a battle from Southern Miss today," said head coach Matt Peck. "They're the defending Conference USA champion and they have a lot of players back. I think our team might have relaxed a bit after we won the first two games. The great thing about it was that we came out in game five and finished it off. Our team needed to win a long, grueling match. That was a good win for us over a previously undefeated team. I couldn't be much happier." Three Blue Raiders contributed 15 or more kills on the afternoon, led by Izabela Kozon's 17. Lindsay Cheatham and Ashley Adams each added a career-high fifteen kills, with Cheatham hitting a blistering .480 in the match. Maria Szivos and Stacy Oladinni chipped in 11 and 10 kills, respectively. Morgan Peterson and Angela Peyton teamed up to direct the potent MT offense, combing for 59 assists with Peterson leading the way with 34 helpers. Defensively, Middle Tennessee was a force at the net, combining for 14 total team blocks to the Golden Eagles' 6. Cheatham had a pair of solo blocks and six assists, both career highs. Peterson also notched a career high with seven block assists. Oladinni had six block assists as well. Brynne Henderson tallied a match-high and career-high 20 digs. Kendall Howard was second on the team with 13, and Kozon had 12. The Blue Raiders

will continue play this evening against Auburn at 7 PM at Alumni Memorial Gym. The final match of the sixth annual Blue Raider Bash will be Sunday at 1 PM.

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