Volleyball sweeps VCU in weekend finale

Blue Raiders have won seven straight

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DENVER - After knocking off 24th-ranked Long Beach State in the afternoon, the Middle Tennessee volleyball team defeated defending Colonial Athletic champion VCU on Saturday evening, 3-0 (25-17, 25-23, 25-20). "It was a great finish to a great weekend for us," said head coach Matt Peck. "Virginia Commonwealth has played a great schedule this season, and I'm proud of the win. We were tired from the Long Beach match, and our kids came together and played pretty well. That's seven in a row for us now, and I'm looking forward to getting into the swing of the Sun Belt season." The Blue Raiders (10-4) were led offensively by defending National Player of the Week Izabela Kozon with 19 kills at a blistering .429 clip. Ashley Adams and Maria Szivos also reached double figures for Middle Tennessee with 12 and 10, respectively. Kozon led the team in digs with five. Both Kendall Howard and Brynne Henderson were second on the team with four. The Blue Raiders began the first set with a pair of Howard service aces, and would never relinquish the lead en route to a 25-17 victory. Both Adams and Kozon tallied four kills in the frame to lead the team. Middle Tennessee took a 2-0 lead in the match with a 25-23 second set win. Each side battled back and forth in the early parts of the frame, but the Blue Raiders grabbed a 13-12 edge and would hold on to it until the end. MT stretched the lead out to seven points, but the Rams put together a gutsy comeback effort that came up just short. Once again, Kozon served as the primary source of

the offense for Middle Tennessee with eight kills in the set. The Blue Raiders would complete the sweep with a 25-20 victory in the third set. The Rams took an early 8-6 advantage, but MT responded with six of the next seven points to take the lead for good. Kozon tallied seven kills in the set. Middle Tennessee will now begin preparation for their first full-fledged conference weekend in Arkansas next weekend. The Blue Raiders will play at UALR on Friday at 7 p.m. and at Arkansas State on Sunday at 1 p.m.

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