Volleyball sweeps rival Western Kentucky

Kozon and Szivos combine for 28 kills in 3-0 victory

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The Middle Tennessee volleyball team extended their winning streak to 12 matches, and handed visiting Western Kentucky their first loss since Sept. 17 with an impressive 3-0 (25-18, 25-22, 25-20) victory over the Hilltoppers on Tuesday night at Alumni Memorial Gym. "I think we played a great match, and any time that it's Western Kentucky, our kids are extra focused," head coach Matt Peck said. "We know how important these matches with Western are, and we know we still have to play them again. We'll celebrate this win tonight and then move on. We have a road trip this weekend and next weekend, and we don't want to trip up." The Blue Raiders were led by Izabela Kozon and Maria Szivos. Kozon, the reigning Sun Belt Player of the Week tallied a match-high 15 kills. Szivos, who is in her first season with the Blue Raiders after playing for New Orleans last year, was second on the team with a career high-tying 13 kills at a scorching .545 clip. Ashley Adams tallied nine kills at a .429 rate. As a team, Middle Tennessee outhit Western Kentucky .360 to .224. Morgan Peterson and Angela Peyton once again split time at setter and recorded 20 and 19 assists, respectively. Defensively, Brynne Henderson led the match in digs with 14. Kozon came up two digs shy of a third consecutive double-double with eight. Stacy Oladinni continued her outstanding play at the net with five block assists. Peterson and Kozon each recorded three block assists. Middle Tennessee took home the first set in wire-to-wire fashion, 25-18. The Blue Raiders raced out to a commanding 16-4 lead. Led by Emily Teegarden, Western Kentucky would attempt an impressive late comeback, cutting the deficit to four at 20-16. However, Kozon

would tally three kills down the stretch seal the set. For the ninth consecutive match, Middle Tennessee grabbed a 2-0 match lead after a 25-22 second set victory. The frame featured 10 ties and seven lead changes as each side tried to gain control. Faced with an 18-20 deficit, Kozon held serve for five consecutive points to give MT a 23-21 edge. After swapping points, Szivos ended the threat with a kill. Szivos fueled the offense in a frenetic third set, propelling the Blue Raiders to a 25-20 win. The junior tallied 6 kills in the frame as Middle Tennessee outhit the Hilltoppers .452 to .345. A Tiffany Elmore attack error handed MT an early 4-3 advantage, and the Blue Raiders would hold the lead throughout. Kozon also recorded four kills in the frame. Middle Tennessee will now prepare for a four match-road swing, beginning Friday at Troy and Sunday at South Alabama.

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