Volleyball to take on North Texas on Friday

Blue Raiders and Mean Green meet in battle of first place teams

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The Middle Tennessee volleyball team has been on a hot streak as of late and will look to keep it going at North Texas on Friday evening. The Blue Raiders, winners of 18 of their last 19 matches, currently sit first in the Sun Belt East Division with an 11-1 conference mark and a 21-5 overall record. North Texas is entering the match on a seven-match winning streak with a 17-9 overall record. The Mean Green are 9-2 in conference play and sit in first place in the Sun Belt West Division. "This is a huge match for us and North Texas," head coach Matt Peck said. "They're on a nice winning streak, and their new coach seems to have really turned it around. We need to take care of business, and this is the only match we're thinking about right now." Middle Tennessee is going into the weekend after a 3-1 win on Tuesday night over ACC foe and 2009 NCAA Tournament participant Georgia Tech. Izabela Kozon, who had not played in nearly two weeks, returned from injury to lead the Blue Raiders with 18 kills and a .371 attack percentage. Kozon, who has earned Sun Belt Player of the Week accolades on three separate occasions this season, has been the primary offensive weapon for Middle Tennessee. The senior holds the team lead in kills with 335, averaging 4.14 per set. She's also been a key cog defensively and is second on the team in digs with 176. Earlier this season, Kozon became just the second player in school history to tally at least 1,500 career kills and 1,000 career digs. Aside from Kozon, the Blue Raiders have received significant contributions from both defending Sun Belt Player of the Week Ashley Adams and Maria Szivos, who also took home a

Player of the Week award earlier this month. Adams is second on the team in kills with 232, and Szivos, in her first year with MT since transferring from New Orleans, has notched 208 in the category. Stacy Oladinni, a 2009 AVCA All-American Honorable Mention, is fourth on the team with 171, and Lindsay Cheatham has also broken into triple digits with 152. Setting duties for the Blue Raiders have been split between Angela Peyton and Morgan Peterson. Peyton holds the team lead in assists with 559, and Peterson isn't far behind her with 531. The duo have combined to direct the high-octane MT offense to marks that ranked among the top 20 in the country in both hitting percentage and kills per set at the start of the week. Both Oladinni and Cheatham have impressed on the defensive side, tallying 99 and 94 blocks, respectively. As a team the Blue Raiders have combined for 239 total blocks, and entered the week ranked 30th in the country in blocks per set, averaging 2.57. Libero Brynne Henderson has anchored the defense, leading the team in digs with 338. Kendall Howard and Peyton have also been vital in the reception game, tallying 166 and 123 digs, respectively. Middle Tennessee and North Texas will square off Friday evening at the Mean Green Volleyball Center in Denton, Texas. The match is slated to begin at 7 p.m.

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