

Blue Raiders hit the road for Florida

Volleyball to take on Florida Atlantic and FIU on first conference road trip

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

After taking home their first conference win of the season this past Sunday, the Middle Tennessee volleyball team and head coach Matt Peck will look to keep it rolling this week against Florida Atlantic and FIU in the first Sun Belt road trip of the season. "This is obviously a huge weekend for us," head coach Matt Peck said. "We have one loss in the conference, and in order for us to keep up with the top teams in the Sun Belt, we need to be successful against FAU and FIU. I think we play well on the road. I'm looking forward to the weekend." Middle Tennessee will open up the weekend at Florida Atlantic in Boca Raton. The Blue Raiders are looking to continue their



recent successes against the Owls, having won nine consecutive matches since last losing at FAU in 2006. In last season's meetings, the Blue Raiders posted a 3-0 victory in Murfreesboro and came back from a hard fought first set loss to win 3-1 in Boca Raton. The Blue and White, who took on Florida Atlantic a day after losing eventual SBC Player of the Year Izabela Kozon, turned to Lindsay Cheatham in the match. A native of nearby Fort Lauderdale, the middle blocker responded with a career day, posting a career-high 16 kills at a .652 rate to go along with four block assists. "Lindsay had a breakout match at Florida Atlantic last season," Peck said. "She had a lot of family and friends there. It was important for her, and we'd obviously love to have it happen again because we're going to need it. This road trip is crucial for us in determining where we are as a team." This season, FAU sits at 3-11 with an 0-2 mark in conference play, losing to Denver and North Texas last weekend. On Sunday, Middle Tennessee will be looking for revenge from last season when they take on FIU, who handed the Blue Raiders their only conference loss in 2010. After Kozon went down early in the first set, the Blue and White put up a fight but ultimately fell 3-1 to the Panthers. "FIU was our only loss last season," Peck said. "We lost our best player a couple minutes in, but we're bringing everyone

else back. They have most of their team back as well, and I think it will be an outstanding match like it usually is between our teams." FIU is coming in with a 10-3 record this season, and beat North Texas and Denver last weekend to move to 2-0 in the Sun Belt. Middle Tennessee will begin play on Friday at FAU at 5:30 p.m. before traveling to Miami to play FIU at 11 a.m.

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