

# Blue Raiders fall to UTSA and UC Davis in Blue Raider Bash Saturday

## Middle Tennessee end first weekend of the season with 1-3 record

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### MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

The Middle Tennessee volleyball team dropped two competitive matches Saturday in the Blue Raider Bash at Alumni Memorial Gym, losing 3-1 (25-23, 20-25, 20-25, 22-25) to UTSA and 3-2 (22-25, 25-18, 22-25, 25-19, 12-15) to UC Davis.



The Blue Raiders opened the day against the UTSA Roadrunners. UTSA controlled most of the opening set, taking a 17-14 lead on a block by

Brittney Malloy and Brandy Huskey. Middle Tennessee then won 10 of the next 14 points as a block by Tyler Richardson and Katie Bange gave the Blue Raiders set point at 24-21. UTSA saved two set points, but Middle Tennessee took set one 25-23 on a Bange kill. The Roadrunners won the next two sets by identical 25-20 scores, hitting .367 in the third set.

The fourth set was a back-and-forth affair with the two teams playing to a 10-10 tie. An Ashley Adams kill sparked a three-point Blue Raiders run that put the home side ahead 13-10. UTSA came back to tie the set at 13-13 and the two teams traded points until 21-20. Bange tied the set for the 14<sup>th</sup> time with a kill to make it 21-21, but a Dempsey Thornton kill put UTSA ahead 22-21. The Roadrunners took three of the next four points to win the set 25-22 and the match 3-1. Thornton led all players with 19 kills as Chelsea Ross led Middle Tennessee with 15 and added nine digs.

The Blue Raiders then took on UC Davis in the nightcap. The Aggies won the first 25-22, but Middle Tennessee stormed back to even the match 1-1 with a 25-18 win in the second. The Blue Raiders took an early 7-4 lead on kills by Ross, Bange, Monet Marshall, and Miri Shade. The lead grew to five at 11-6 when Adams and Richardson combined for a block of the Aggies' Mary Schroeder. Middle Tennessee led by as much as six in the set and won it 25-18 on a Bange kill. UC Davis won the third set just like the first 25-22, but the Blue Raiders forced a fifth set with a 25-19 win in the fourth set. Middle Tennessee used five blocks to get an 11-5 lead in the fourth. Middle Tennessee led by as much as eight in the set as an Adams kill made the score 23-15 before the Blue Raiders

took it 25-19.

The fifth set started out looking like it was the Blue Raiders' for the taking. Back to back Ross kills and an ace by Halie Vannoy sparked a 4-0 run to open the set. The Aggies answered back with six of the next nine points to make the score 7-6. Ross then put down another kill to give Middle Tennessee an 8-6 lead. UC Davis tied the set 8-8 on a pair of Valerie Brain kills, but Adams responded with two kills of her own to give the lead back to the Blue Raiders 10-8. With the score 11-9, the Aggies took the next three points to go ahead 12-11. Adams tied the set with her 17<sup>th</sup> kill of the match, but a Victoria Lee kill put UC Davis ahead 13-12. After a Blue Raiders error, the Aggies blocked a Bange attack to win the set 15-12 and the match 3-2.

Ross led all players with 20 kills and added 13 digs for her first career double-double. Alyssa Ivey led Middle Tennessee with 27 assists as Shelby Anderton added 22. Richardson was in on six of the Blue Raiders' 12 blocks against UC Davis.

The Blue Raiders will take to the road next weekend, playing in the Hokie Invitational hosted by Virginia Tech. Middle Tennessee's first match in Blacksburg, Va. will be on Friday, August 31 against Harvard at 4 p.m.

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