Volleyball heads to North Carolina for Carolina Classic

Blue Raiders to face LSU, host Tar Heels for first time

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - For the second of three consecutive weekends, the Middle Tennessee volleyball team will go on the road for a tournament. This weekend, the Blue Raiders will play in the Carolina Volleyball Classic hosted by North Carolina. Middle Tennessee opens play Friday at 3 p.m. against Western Michigan, followed by matches against LSU and the host Tar Heels on Saturday.

The Blue Raiders went 2-2 on their roadtrip to Virginia last weekend. Middle Tennessee won its first match of the trip last Friday against Harvard in the Hokie Invitational 3-2 (26-24, 25-20, 20-25, 20-25, 15-8). Chelsea Ross led the Blue Raiders with 19 kills and added 11 digs. Middle Tennessee hit .529 in the deciding fifth set. The next day, the Blue Raiders dispatched of Towson 3-1 (25-20, 26-24, 20-25, 25-16). Ross had 23 kills in that match and hit .439. Ashley Adams added 13 kills as the Blue Raiders hit .314 for the match.

Middle Tennessee wrapped up the Hokie Invitational with a 3-1 (25-18, 17-25, 17-25, 18-25) loss at Virginia Tech. Ross had another double-double of 15 kills and 10 digs. Bri McCombs led all players with 15 digs. On Monday, Middle Tennessee dropped a 3-2 (25-18, 21-25, 25-21, 21-25, 10-15) match at VCU. Adams led all players with 20 kills and hit .400. Tyler Richardson was in on a career-high 11 blocks and McCombs had a match-high 20 digs.

Ross was named Sun Belt Volleyball Player of the Week on Monday for her play in the Hokie Invitational. She averaged 4.37 kills per set in Middle Tennessee's three matches and hit .312. Her 23 kills and .439 hitting percentage against Towson last Saturday made her the ninth Blue Raider since 2003 to have at least 20 kills in a single match and hit over .400.

Middle Tennessee will be playing two teams for the first time this weekend, both on Saturday. The Blue Raiders will face LSU at 9 a.m. that day, looking for their fifth win all-time against the SEC. Middle Tennessee will also have its first meeting with North Carolina to close the tournament that night at 6:30 p.m. The Tar Heels received votes in this week's AVCA Top-25 Coaches' Poll and are

5-1 so far this season. The Blue Raiders meet Western Michigan for the second time ever on Friday at 3 p.m. Western Michigan, the preseason favorites in the Mid-American Conference, won the first meeting between the two teams in 2000 and are 4-2 to start 2012.

Fans can follow the Middle Tennessee volleyball team on Twitter @MT_Volleyball for updates from the road and coverage of all three matches this weekend.

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