Volleyball swept by Western Michigan at Carolina Classic

Ross tallies double-digit kills for eighth straight match

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CHAPEL HILL, N.C. - The Middle Tennessee volleyball team was swept in three sets (13-25, 29-31, 18-25) by the Western Michigan Broncos on Friday afternoon at the Carolina Classic at Carmichael Arena. Freshman outside hitter Chelsea Ross led the Blue Raiders with 10 kills, her eighth consecutive match with double-figure kills.

Middle Tennessee (3-6) took the first two points of the match on a Halie Vannoy ace



and a Ross kill, but Western Michigan (5-2) quickly took control of the first set by winning the next four points. The Broncos led 6-4 when a Gillian Asque kill sparked a 10-2 Western Michigan run that gave them a 17-6 lead. Western Michigan hit .409 in the opening set as the Blue Raiders only got as close as nine points in the first.

The Blue Raiders got off to a better start in the second, taking a 6-1 lead after two Tyler Richardson kills and a block by Richardson and Ashley Adams. Middle Tennessee grew the advantage to seven, 10-3, on back-to-back kills by Ross and Miri Shade. Western Michigan closed to within two at 13-11, but the Blue Raiders went on a 5-1 run capped off by another Vannoy ace to go up 18-12. Middle Tennessee was two points from leveling the match at a set apiece before an Ali Gossen ace and a Blue Raiders error tied the set 23-23. Western Michigan then earned a set point on a Jessica Brown kill, making the score 24-23.

Middle Tennessee fought off a set point at 25-24 on a Richardson kill, then took a 26-25 lead on a Broncos error. Western Michigan tied the set 26-26 with a Carlee Berland kill. The Blue Raiders fought off three more set points but the Broncos got kills from Asque and Gossen to win the second set 31-29 and go up 2-0.

Western Michigan got out to a fast 6-2 start in the third set. Middle Tennessee got to within one at 6-5 on a block by Richardson and Shade. The Blue Raiders were able to hang around early in the third set, staying within two to three points. With the score 13-11, the Broncos went on an 8-1 run capped off by a Richelle Raney solo block to go ahead 21-12. Middle Tennessee closed to within five late in

the set but it was too little too late. Ranney put down a kill to end the set 25-18 and give Western Michigan the sweep.

The Blue Raiders are back in action in the Carolina Classic Saturday with two matches. Middle Tennessee opens the day against LSU at 9 a.m., followed by a match against the host North Carolina Tar Heels at 6:30 p.m.

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