

# Blue Raiders drop match to #12 Louisville Friday night

## Ross leads Middle Tennessee with 13 kills against nationally-ranked Cardinals

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**LOUISVILLE, Ky.** - The Middle Tennessee volleyball team played its first match of the 2012 season against a ranked opponent Friday night, losing 3-0 (19-25, 11-25, 19-25) to #12 Louisville at the KFC Yum! Center in the Louisville Invitational.

Chelsea Ross led the Blue Raiders with 13 kills. Freshman setter Shelby Anderton had 28 assists and Bri McCombs led all players with 19 digs. Miri Shade added a season-high 11 digs.



Middle Tennessee (3-10) took an early 3-1 lead in the first set on a Shade kill. Louisville (9-1) tied the set 4-4, but back-to-back kills by Shade and Brandi Waller put the Blue Raiders ahead 6-4. Middle Tennessee took its largest lead of the set at 13-10 on an Ashley Adams kill, a cushion it would have up to 16-13. The Cardinals got within one at 16-15 on a Kaitlynn James kill and a block by Emily Juhl and Tanya Lukyanenko. After the Blue Raiders got a kill from Ross to make the score 17-15, Louisville tied the set 17-17 on a Lukyanenko kill. The two teams traded points up to 19-19, when the Cardinals won each of the last six points to win the set 25-19.

The second set started with the Blue Raiders and Cardinals trading points, as a Waller kill tied the set 5-5. Louisville broke the tie with a 3-0 run to take an 8-5 lead. Middle Tennessee closed to within two at 8-6 on a Ross kill, but Louisville won seven of the next nine points to take a 15-8 lead. The Cardinals hit .389 in the second set to the Blue Raiders' .073 and finished the second set on a 7-1 run to win the set 25-11.

Louisville got out to a 6-3 lead in the third on kills by Carly Sahagian and Lola Arslanbekova. Middle Tennessee cut the lead to two at 7-5 on a Waller kill. The Cardinals then went on a 4-0 run to go up 11-5. Louisville led 13-6 when a Ross kill sparked a four-point Blue Raiders run that made the score 13-10. The Cardinals tried to pull away with a 5-1 run capped off by a Blue Raiders error to take an

18-11 lead. Once again, Middle Tennessee ran off four straight points as a block by Shade and Tyler Richardson made the score 18-15. Louisville took advantage of three straight Blue Raiders miscues to take a 21-15 lead and rode that to a 25-19 win in the third set and a sweep of the match.

The Cardinals hit .327 for the match while Middle Tennessee hit .082. Louisville also had an advantage in digs 55-54 and blocks 7-2. Arslanbekova led Louisville with 11 kills as libero Caitlin Welch had 16 digs.

The Blue Raiders will play two more matches tomorrow in the Louisville Invitational. Middle Tennessee will take on Miami (Fla.) at 12:30 p.m. before a 4 p.m. match against UNLV.

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