Blue Raiders fall to Troy 3-0 at Alumni Memorial Gym

Ross and Bange lead Middle Tennessee with nine kills each

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - The Middle Tennessee dropped its second consecutive Sun Belt Conference match Saturday night, losing 3-0 (19-25, 20-25, 13-25) to the Troy Trojans at Alumni Memorial Gym. Freshmen Chelsea Ross and Katie Bange each had nine kills to lead the Blue Raiders.

Troy (10-7, 1-1 Sun Belt) jumped out to a 9-3 lead in the opening set on kills by Mailande Parker, Devin Von Pingel, and Breanna Cullity. Middle Tennessee (3-14, 0-2) got within four points at 12-8 on kills by Ross and Miri Shade, as well as a Bri McCombs service ace. The Blue Raiders trailed 15-9 when a Bange kill sparked a three-point run that made the score 15-12. Middle Tennessee closed to within two on a Shade kill that made the score 18-16. The Trojans then won five of the next seven points to grow the lead back to five at 23-18. Troy won the set 25-19 on a block by Alexandra Alexander and Darby Griff.

The Blue Raiders took control of the second set early, as a block by Ross and Monet Marshall and a Bange kill put Middle Tennessee ahead 7-4. Troy came back to take an 8-7 lead on a Cullity kill, but the Blue Raiders tied the set 8-8 on a Marshall kill. Middle Tennessee led 9-8 when a Cullity kill started a 5-0 Trojans run that put Troy in the lead 13-9. A Brandi Waller kill ended the Troy run and started a Middle Tennessee spurt. The Blue Raiders won seven points in a row, highlighted by two more Waller kills and two blocks by Tyler Richardson and Shelby Anderton, to take a 16-13 lead. Middle Tennessee led 18-15 when a Von Pingel kill led to a three-point Troy run that tied the set 18-18. The two teams traded points up to 20-20 when a Cullity kill put the Trojans ahead 21-20. Troy won the next four points to win the set 25-20 and go up 2-0 in the match.

The two teams traded points early in the third set, playing to a 5-5 tie. Troy then took a 7-5 lead on a Kelley Curran service ace. The Blue Raiders stayed within striking distance, closing the gap to one at 13-12 on a Troy error. The Trojans then pulled away as a Cullity kill started a 12-1 Troy run that ended the set. The Trojans hit .414 in the final set to win it 25-13 and the match 3-0.

Cullity led all players with 19 kills as Blair Winston added 10 kills. Troy held Middle Tennessee to a .120 hitting percentage and had a 40-27 dig advantage and had seven blocks.

Middle Tennessee returns to action on Saturday, September 29 at Louisiana. The match has been rescheduled to a 3 p.m. first serve from its original 7 p.m. start.

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