Volleyball falls to No. 20 WKU 3-0 at Alumni Memorial Gym

Waller and Ross each tally nine kills for Blue Raiders

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. - Taking on its second ranked opponent of the season, the Middle Tennessee volleyball team suffered a 3-0 (18-25, 17-25, 19-25) defeat to the no. 20 WKU Lady Toppers Tuesday night at Alumni Memorial Gym.

Outside hitters Brandi Waller and Chelsea Ross each had nine kills to lead the Blue Raiders' offense. Tyler Richardson and Shelby Anderton had five kills apiece. Bri McCombs had eight digs for Middle Tennessee.

Middle Tennessee (4-15, 1-3 Sun Belt) took a quick 2-0 lead in the opening set on a pair of Ross service aces. WKU (18-3, 4-0) came back with three straight points to take a 3-2 lead. The Blue Raiders tied the set three different times as a Waller kill tied the set 5-5. Haley Bodway put the Lady Toppers ahead 6-5 with a kill, starting an 8-0 WKU run that made the score 13-5. Middle Tennessee got within four points at 14-10 on kills by Anderton and Katie Bange. With WKU leading 15-10, the Blue Raiders went on a three-point run capped off by a block by Anderton and Rachel Shaughnessy to get within two at 15-13. That would be as close as Middle Tennessee would get in the first set as WKU won 10 of the next 15 points to win the set 25-18.

The Lady Toppers won the first three points of the second set and seven of the first 10 to take a 7-3 lead. A Waller kill started a Middle Tennessee three-point spurt that got the Blue Raiders within one, 7-6. WKU then grew the lead to five at 11-6 on kills by Paige Wessel and Heather Boyan. The Blue Raiders closed the gap to four at 13-9 on an Anderton kill, but a Jordyn Skinner kill started a 4-1 Lady Toppers run that made the score 17-10. WKU hit a match-high .464 in the second set, taking it 25-17 on Skinner's fifth kill of the set.

The two sides traded points to start the third set, playing to a 6-6 tie. WKU gained the advantage with a 6-0 run to take a 12-6 lead. The Blue Raiders battled to within four at 14-10 on a Ross kill. However, a Boyan kill sparked a five-point Lady Toppers run that put WKU up 19-10. A Shaughnessy kill ended the WKU scoring spurt and started a Middle Tennessee run. The Blue

Raiders won the next three points to get to within five points at 19-14. Trailing 21-15, Middle Tennessee closed the gap to three on kills by Anderton and Waller, making the score 21-18. WKU just proved to be too much on this night, taking three of the next four points to win the set 25-19 and the match 3-0.

The Lady Toppers hit .402 for the match, holding Middle Tennessee to a .149 mark. Each team had six blocks in the match. Boyan led all players with 13 kills as Skinner added 11 and eight digs.

Middle Tennessee takes to the road for its next three matches beginning Friday, Oct. 5 at ULM. First serve is at 7 p.m.

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