Blue Raiders drop 3-0 match at North Texas

Middle Tennessee now 2-4 in Sun Belt play

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DENTON, Texas - The Middle Tennessee volleyball team slipped to 2-4 in the Sun Belt Sunday after a 3-0 (19-25, 20-25, 18-25) loss to North Texas at the Mean Green Volleyball Center.

Chelsea Ross led the Blue Raiders with 12 kills and added seven digs. Katie Bange added eight kills with Brandi Waller putting down six kills with a .333 hitting percentage. Shelby Anderton dished out 32 assists as Miri Shade collected a team-high eight digs.

Middle Tennessee (5-16, 2-4 Sun Belt) battled back from a 3-1 deficit in the first set to take a 5-4 lead on a Bange kill and an ace by Rachel Shaughnessy. North Texas (18-7, 4-2) took the lead back at 6-5 on a Carnae Dillard kill and a block by Hallie McDonald and Courtney Windham. The Blue Raiders came back with another Bange kill and a block by Anderton and Richardson to go ahead 7-6. The lead grew to two at 11-9 on a solo block by Anderton.

North Texas then won the next four points to take a 13-11 lead. Middle Tennessee tied the set 13-13 on Bange's third kill of the set. The Mean Green regained the lead at 14-13 on a Windham kill. North Texas led 16-15 when a Karissa Flack kill started a four-point Mean Green run that put them up 20-15. The Blue Raiders only got as close as four points for the rest of the set, as North Texas won the opening set 25-19.

Middle Tennessee got off to a fast start in the second set. The Blue Raiders went on a five-point run capped off by a Bri McCombs ace to take a 5-2 lead. North Texas answered the Middle Tennessee run with a four-point run of its own to ahead 6-5. The Blue Raiders then got kills from Bange and Shade to take back the lead, 7-6. The two teams then traded points, playing to a 10-10 tie. North Texas won the next two points, but a Bange kill started a three-point Blue Raiders run that put Middle Tennessee ahead 13-12.

The lead would not last long. The Mean Green took seven of the next nine points to take a 19-15 lead. The advantage for North Texas grew to six at 22-16 on a Camille Cherry ace. North Texas led 24-17 when Middle Tennessee used two Ross kills and a Mean Green error to fight off three set

points, making the score 24-20. The Mean Green took a 2-0 lead in the match with a 25-20 win in the second set on a kill by Eboni Godfrey.

North Texas got out to a 9-2 lead in the third set. The Mean Green won eight out of nine points using three Dillard kills and two from Windham. Middle Tennessee closed to within five at 9-4 on a Waller kill. The Blue Raiders then closed the gap to three at 14-11 on consecutive kills by Ross and Anderton. However the Mean Green just proved to be too much on the day. North Texas hit a match-high .368 in the third set, winning it 25-18 on a Windham kill.

The Mean Green hit .340 for the match, holding Middle Tennessee to a .224 hitting percentage. North Texas also held a 43-40 edge in digs and an 8-4 advantage in blocks. Dillard led all players with 13 kills as Windham tallied 11 kills and hit .526 for the match.

The Blue Raiders wrap up their three-match road swing with a match at Austin Peay on Wednesday, Oct. 10. First serve is at 7 p.m.

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