MT takes down FIU in three sets Friday night

Raiders move to 7-4 in C-USA, clinch C-USA Championship berth

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MURFREESBORO, Tenn. -

Sophomore Chelsea Ross and freshman Jale Hervey tallied double-digit kills Friday night in the Middle Tennessee volleyball team's three-set victory over Conference USA foe FIU at Alumni Memorial Gym. In the win, the Blue Raiders improve to 16-10 and 7-4 in C-USA, while the Panthers drop to 10-18 and 4-8 in C-USA.



Ross and Hervey each notched 10 kills in the victory, with redshirt-freshman Jazmyne Johnson recording eight, matching her career-high. Junior Ailime de Freitas led MT with 20 assists, while redshirt-junior Kendall Howard had a match-high 11 digs and sophomore Rachel Shaughnessy came up with five blocks. With the win, the Blue Raiders clinched a spot in the Conference USA Volleyball Championship at Alumni Memorial Gym.

The Blue Raiders tallied the first four points of the match before the Panthers answered with five straight to take a 5-4 lead. From there, MT would rattle off a 10-4 run to take control of the set. The Raiders would lead by no less than three the rest of the way in the opening stanza, taking a 25-21 victory. Howard and Ross combined for 11 digs in a set where MT overcame a .086 hitting percentage.

Middle Tennessee played a strong second set on its way to a 25-20 win, hitting .414 in the frame. The Blue Raiders never trailed in the set, but the Panthers kept it interesting, at one point trailing 19-18. Hervey and Ross each had four kills in the set, which the Blue Raiders closed out on a 6-2 run on their way to a 2-0 lead.

MT led 17-10 in the third set before FIU cut into the deficit, cutting things to 22-19. A Panther service error, followed by a pair of attack errors, led to FIU's demise with Middle Tennessee taking the set and match with a 25-21 victory.

The Blue Raiders return to action Sunday at noon when MT hosts Florida Atlantic in its 2013 regular season home finale.

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