

# 2020 NAIA Women's Volleyball Championship

May 02, 2021

**SIoux CITY, Iowa** — Missouri Baptist defeated Midland (Neb.) to win the 2020 NAIA Women's Volleyball Championship for the first time Saturday night in the Tyson Events Center.

Both teams opened their season back in September and the first match was against each other. Midland came out victorious in that five-set match. Little did they know that a little over seven months after they kicked off their season together they would meet each other again in the national championship match.

The teams went their separate ways during the regular season and Midland worked its way up in the poll from No. 20 to No. 12. Missouri Baptist started the season ranked at No. 5 and held that rank until the final two polls were moved to No. 6.

At the conclusion of the regular season, Missouri Baptist qualified for the national championship as the American Midwest Conference Tournament Champion and Midland qualified with an at-large berth.

The teams then worked their way through each round of the championship-winning their respective pools and then upsetting higher seeds through the quarterfinal and semifinal rounds.

The championship match opened with Midland taking an early 7-4 lead. The Warriors would extend that lead to as much as five points. Missouri Baptist made a run to try to overtake Midland but the Warriors saw their lead to a set one win.

The tables turned in set two as MBU took the early 7-4 lead that they would extend to 12 points that would give the team the 25-14 set two win.

Set three was the most contested set with 13 ties. The final tie was at 24 before the Warriors went on a three-point run and with a kill from Sydney Morehouse, Midland took the lead two sets to one.

Midland opened up the fourth set with another 7-4 run for an early lead. The Spartans tied the score at 13 and went on a 7-1 run sparked by a kill from Giovanna Tapigliani. That lead would give MBU the advantage to even the score at two sets apiece.

The teams traded points to start set five until Missouri Baptist went on a 5-1 run. Midland worked their way back within a two-point difference but the Spartans hit 15 with a kill from Tapigliani before the Warriors could make up the difference.

For only the fourth time in NAIA history, the championship match went to five sets.

Tapigliani of Missouri Baptist led all scorers with 22 kills in the match. Morehouse of Midland followed with 21 kills of her own.

Ariana Macies of MBU led the defensive effort with 28 digs in the night.

The Spartans recorded a total of 19 blocks in the match and Raylyn Dodd led the way. Dodd had an impressive 13 block assists and two solo blocks in the match.

### **All-Tournament Team**

Camryn Opfer, Concordia (Neb.)

Allison Timmermans, Dordt (Iowa)

Kiley McMurtrey, Eastern Oregon

Jenna Wagemester, Grand View (Iowa)

Kalli Hegerle, Jamestown (N.D.)

Anna Holen, Jamestown (N.D.)

Taliyah Flores, Midland (Neb.)

Hope Leimbach, Midland (Neb.)

Ariana Macies, Missouri Baptist

Giovanna Tapigliani, Missouri Baptist

AJ Kacmarynski, Northwestern (Iowa)

Anna Wedel, Northwestern (Iowa)

Noura Meawad, Park (Mo.)

Lexi Malone, Westmont (Calif.)

Maggie Hiatt, Midland (Neb.)

**Tournament Defender of the Year:** Brenna Krommendyk, Dordt (Iowa)

**Tournament Most Valuable Player:** Manuela Vargas, Missouri Baptist

**Tournament Coach of the Year:** Chris Nichols, Missouri Baptist