

SPORTS

Vikings out to 2-1 start

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The opening of the 2017 St. Johns River State College softball season was a little good and a little auspicious.

It was auspicious because one game came against a Georgia school, then the next game came against a Puerto Rican-based college that featured players as young as 14 and 15 years old.

In the end, though, the Vikings came away from the JUCO Kickoff at the Eddie Moore Softball Complex in Clearwater with a 2-1 record, losing to South Georgia State, 10-3, then beating the young University of Puerto Rico-Carolina team, 12-1, in four innings, then handing St. Petersburg a 3-1 loss.

All the games were played on Saturday because a continual rain ended any hopes of playing games on Sunday.

The Vikings started slowly with South Georgia State starting pitcher Sarah Smith, who allowed three hits and took a no-hitter into the seventh inning before the Vikings got three runs on three hits. She walked four and struck out four. Makayla Clark went 3-for-5 with a run and an RBI for the winning team.

"I think if anything, this tournament, especially the first game, helped our nerves," second-year Vikings coach Jill Semento said. "Chris (starting and losing pitcher Marasa) was throwing a good game, but we couldn't get a hit. She kept us in the game until the seventh inning."

The Hawks broke it open with seven runs on eight hits against reliever Madison Roeshink and Marasa, who came back in during the seventh. For the Vikings, Marasa had one hit, one run and one RBI, while Kayla Kight and Emily Collier each went 1-for-3.

The Vikings pounded out 10 hits in a four-inning game with Puerto Rico-Carolina, a team Semento said she agreed to play, but didn't know the makeup of the team until she found out before the first pitch.

Winning pitcher Skye Davenport allowed two hits, walked none and struck out eight for her first win of the year.

Marasa and Kight each went 2-for-3 with Marasa scoring a run and Kight driving in two runs. Collecting one hit each were Selena Bezares, Marissa Huggins, Rachel Johnson, Sydney Shows, Ta'Shyllia Brockington and Brittany Lewis.

The third game against St. Petersburg (2-3) saw the Vikings take a 2-0 lead in the third inning on RBI singles by Shows and Maegan Stone, then Shows scored in the fifth inning on a single by Bezares.

Softball

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Winning pitcher Roeshink walked one batter and struck out six while allowing six hits. Collier was 2-for-2 with a run scored, while seven players – Huggins, Kight, Shows, Bezares, Stone, Phillips and Lewis – had one hit apiece.

"I told the team after that first game that this is not going to dictate our season," Semento said. "I reminded them that we play as a team and then they went out and played two very good games after that."

The Vikings will travel back to Clearwater on Friday to face St. Petersburg in a doubleheader starting at 2 p.m.
