

SPORTS

9A PALATKA DAILY NEWS • TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2018

Semento upbeat after SJR State softball sweeps St. Petersburg

Palatka Daily News

The St. Johns River State College is establishing one of its goals for coach Jill Semento – have an early-season presence against non-conference opponents.

The Vikings swept a doubleheader Saturday at home against St. Petersburg Junior College, beating the Titans in the first game, 6-5, on a walk-off, two-run home run by Morgan Scala in the seventh inning, then scoring the first seven runs in the second game before cruising to a 9-5

victory.

The wins improved the Vikings' mark to 8-3 and left Semento feeling good.

“Yeah, I do like what I see,” she said. “I’d like for us to hit the ball a little more consistently, but we have large breaks in between games and that’s how things got scheduled, so I take the blame for that. Our defense is coming along and we’ve had good pitching. I hope we can keep it going.”

In the opener, the Vikings had a 4-2 lead going into the seventh inning, but

RBI singles by Nicole Santaniello and Kayla Sanchez tied the game, then an error by shortstop Brooklynn Basile allowed the go-ahead run to score.

But in the bottom of the seventh, leadoff hitter Kelsea Friend reached on an error by pitcher Amanda Patch, bringing up Scala. Scala didn’t waste time by taking the first pitch by Patch over the left-field fence to win it. It was her first collegiate home run and finished out a 3-for-4, two-run, four-RBI game that saw her deliver a two-run single in a three-run second inning.

Jaime Valenta, Friend, Reganne McCarl and Ariel McCullough had one hit each.

The Vikings got out to a 4-0 lead in the second game with Selena Bezares delivering an RBI single, McCarl coming up with an RBI double and Selena Nunez driving in a run with a sacrifice fly.

Nunez hit her first home run of the season in the fifth and Bezares had her fourth home run of the year in the sixth, both solo shots.

Friend was 2-for-3 with two runs

scored, Bezares ended 2-for-4 with three runs and four RBI and McCarl was 2-for-2 with a run and an RBI. Scala, Rachel Johnson, Nunez and Alyssa Rosenbaum had one hit each for the Vikings.

St. Petersburg, which split a doubleheader a week earlier with SJRSC in Clearwater, is 10-6.

SJRSC will host South Georgia State at 2 p.m. in a doubleheader today. The makeup from the rainout between those teams last Friday in Douglas, Ga., will be March 6.