

SPORTS

St. Johns softball team sweeps Pasco

Rallies in seventh inning to take opener, 7-6

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By the time the doubleheader was over, first-year St. Johns River State College softball coach Marti Littlefield was pleased with the performance of her team.

And it could not have come at a better time.

The Vikings scored two runs in the bottom of the seventh inning to pull out a 7-6 win over Pasco-Hernando in the first game of the doubleheader, then got five runs in the fifth inning and two more in the sixth to deliver a 7-3 win over Pasco-Hernando in the nightcap for their second doubleheader sweep of the season, improving their record to 10-12. They have one more doubleheader at 2-16 Palm Beach State before going into the challenging Mid-Florida Conference schedule.

"I'm very much feeling better after this," Littlefield said. "I haven't seen them play that well in a while, so I was very, very happy with what we did. We got clutch hits, made the plays in the field, especially in the second game (an errorless nightcap) and got great pitching. We kept our energy up and I think that helped play a little more loosely. They brought some real energy to the second game so if we keep their spirits and energy up, they'll play better ball."

In the nightcap, Maddie Tomas (6-2) got the win in the circle, allowing eight hits, walking no batters and striking out six. Down 3-0 in the fifth, the Vikings got five runs as Lauryn Markis, JesseAnn Ackerman and Reganne McCarl all singled home runs. Harli Phillips delivered a two-run home run in the sixth to help put it away.

Phillips, Abby Ferlin, Markis, Ackerman, McCarl, Cardaejia Talley, Taylor Finney and Kendell Moody all had hits in the second game.

The Vikings were down 6-5 in the bottom of the seventh of the opener when Brianna Clapper, who was 3-for-4 with a run and three RBI and just missed out on the cycle by a triple, doubled to start the inning. Talley was hit by a pitch and Ferlin singled to load the bases. McCarl singled in pinch-runner Savannah Law to tie the game. There was a temporary setback when Jaime Valenta flied out and Talley was thrown out at home trying to score for a double play. But with the other runners moving up on the double play, catcher Shelby Coyne tried to pick Ferlin off at third, but threw errantly to allow Ferlin to score the winning run.

Talley was 2-for-3, Ferlin was 2-for-4 with a run scored and McCarl and Kelsea Friend added one hit each. Tomas got the win in the first game, throwing 4 1/3 innings of relief of Moody, allowing two runs on three hits, walking one run and striking out five.