

SPORTS

Vikings open 2-2 in Vegas

Drop first two volleyball matches
before beating East Los Angeles
and Arizona school

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The line goes "What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas."

In this case, though, the St. Johns River State College volleyball team will take with it the experiences of a fairly respectable opening to the season this past weekend.

"I'm just really pleased with how we all handled ourselves," said Vikings coach Matt Cohen of his team's play in the College of Southern Nevada tournament in which his Vikings went 2-2, winning their final two matches.

"Considering we had flown in the night before and had to start at 10 p.m. our time (7 p.m. against the host team) and we were still trying to get our legs back from the flight, I thought we handled things appropriately. I think we have high expectations for ourselves and this was a fun experience. For us, I think this was a win-win experience."

The Vikings opened up on the short end of a 25-14, 18-25, 25-21, 25-20 match Thursday night late against the host team, then fell again early Friday to Mesa (Ariz.) Community College, 25-19, 25-17, 25-20. The bounced back later that day against East Los Angeles Community College, 25-16, 25-14, 25-13, and won the second time around against Mesa, 29-27, 18-25, 25-14, 25-22.

"The first match, we were a little sloppy at times, but I was pleased with the way things stacked up for us (by Friday)," Cohen said. "I felt like against CSN, we competed hard and it was a good match. I was a little disappointed with the loss on Friday (to Mesa), but we came back against East Los Angeles and then played well the second time we had Mesa, which was a preseason Top 20 team (in Division II junior college) nationally."

The Vikings made quick work of East Los Angeles as Lacey Redinger had nine kills, Paula Foelsing had seven kills and 10 digs and Lucy Herter added 14 digs. Jordyn Pruski handed out 24 assists and added five digs for the Vikings. In Saturday's rematch win over Mesa, Foelsing, an outside hitter, had 17 kills and 10 digs, while Redinger put up 12 kills and 22 digs. Herter added seven kills and 20 digs, Dariana Luna recorded 23 digs and Pruski put up 41 assists and 22 digs.

"I felt like for our opening matches on the road over 2,000 miles away, we had good, stressful experiences right off the bat," Cohen said. "If you want to go out, go big."

The Vikings will be off until the day after Labor Day when they host old rival Florida State College-Jacksonville at 6 p.m. on Sept. 3.

Herter had 10 kills and 10 digs, while Selena Kriston had 12 digs and Pruski handed out 32 assists and added 11 digs in the loss to the tournament host on Thursday.

