

SPORTS

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B SECTION

St. Johns volleyball downs Gateway, breaks into national rankings

The St. Johns River State College volleyball team continues to win. Now the Vikings' winning has gained national attention.

The Vikings swept Sun-Lakes Conference rival Florida Gateway, 25-16, 25-14, 25-9, Monday at Tuten Gymnasium to win their 11th match in the last 12.

Brooklyn McLeod had nine kills, while Lucy Herter put down seven kills. Jordyn Pruski handed out 34 assists and added 11 digs, Dariana Luna scrapped for 20 digs and delivered four aces in a row in the third set, Lacey Redinger had 10 digs and Rickie Sheets added three straight service aces in the second set.

The win left the Vikings at 15-5 overall and 5-0 in the conference to remain ahead of the field. And thanks to their win last Wednesday in four sets over Top 10 Gulf Coast State,

the Vikings have edged their way into the NJCAA Division II Top 20 poll at No. 18. Believe it or not, Gulf Coast dropped just one spot to No. 9.

"That makes no sense to me," Vikings coach Matt Cohen said. "But on the other hand, it's nice to have two Florida schools in the Top 20."

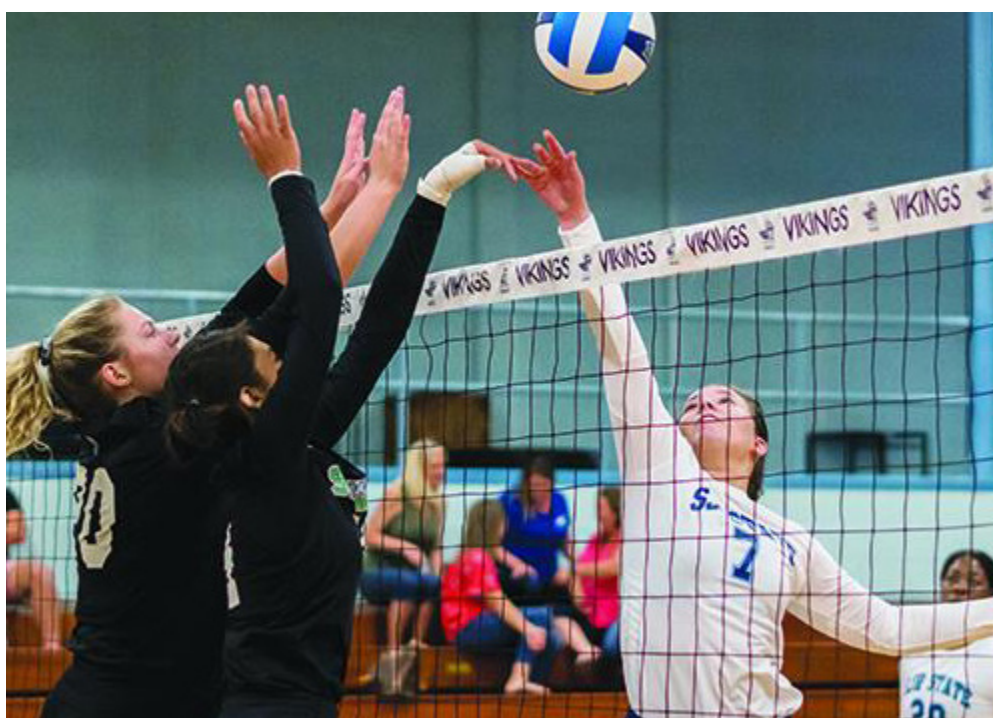
On Saturday, the Vikings finished their end of the Viking Invitational at Tuten Gymnasium with a 3-1 mark. They swept Spartanburg Methodist (S.C.), 25-13, 25-14, 25-15, but fell to Division I unbeaten New Mexico Military Institute, 20-25, 25-18, 25-21, 25-13.

In the win over Spartanburg Methodist, Kendal Hoge had 11 kills, McLeod recorded seven kills and an ace along with four digs, Luna added 12 digs and a service ace and Pruski handed out 33 assists, had an ace and added three digs Louisa Marunde

added nine kills and four digs. In the loss to the 23-0 New Mexico Military Institute, Marunde put up 13 kills, one assist and seven digs, while Redinger recorded 11 kills, five assists, two aces and nine digs and Pruski handed out 26 assists and had eight digs. Pruski had 84 assists in three matches for the Vikings.

The Vikings travel to Leesburg on Wednesday to face off with Lake-Sumter, who the Vikings took down in straight sets on Sept. 11.

"Lake-Sumter (2-7 overall, 2-3 in conference) is playing better than when we last played," Cohen said. "They gave Gulf Coast (14-4, 4-1) all they could before losing in straight sets (25-21, 26-24, 25-23). We have to be ready for a better team."



St. Johns River State College's Jordyn Pruski (right) had 26 assists and eight digs as the Vikings beat Florida Gateway in straight sets Monday night. (FRAN RUCHALSKI / Palatka Daily News)