

FSU volleyball team wins one, loses one

By Becky Hines
Democrat correspondent

Since seven freshmen are on her squad, FSU volleyball coach Cecile Reynaud never doubted experience would be a factor in the season-opening Converse Classic Volleyball Tournament.

Reynaud's concern Friday afternoon was whether the Lady Seminoles' convincing three-game sweep over South Alabama would give the young team enough experience to handle a strong Minnesota team later in the day. The answer? Not quite, as Minnesota swept FSU 15-12, 15-6, 16-14.

FSU jumped to an 11-4 lead in the first game, demonstrating the strong passing and defensive game it had used to beat South Alabama. But a loss of momentum (Shannon Kelly turned her ankle but later re-entered) allowed the Golden Gophers' strong offense to recover from their shaky start.

Minnesota capitalized on FSU's inexperience with a powerful jump serve that kept the Lady Seminoles passing game off balance all night.

"It's a hard serve to receive. Most of our kids just got out of high school three or four months ago. They haven't seen this yet," Reynaud said. "Good volleyball is just very, very fast. I think our players just saw that. We wanted to see how we match up with one of the toughest teams we'll face."

Minnesota, currently second in the Big 10, opened its season last week with a win over Jacksonville and looked forward to the tough match with FSU. "Neither of us had been tested," said Minnesota coach Stephanie Schleuder. "Both teams certainly have ability."

Minnesota's Andrea Gonzalez flaunted her ability in the match, hammering 24 kill shots and picking up four service aces for the Gophers.

For FSU, senior Julie Todd provided consistency for the inexperienced team, chalking up 10 kills and nine solo blocks. Freshmen Maggie Philgence, a member of the Virgin Island National team, also added 14 well-placed kill shots for the Lady Seminoles in the match.

FSU beat South Alabama earlier 15-5, 15-7, 15-1.

In other games, Georgia defeated Alabama-Birmingham 15-0, 15-13, 15-12 and swept South Florida 15-6, 15-10, 15-6.

South Alabama beat South Florida in five games 11-15, 9-15, 15-9, 15-12, 15-5, and Minnesota swept Alabama-Birmingham 15-7, 15-8, and 15-12.

Today, Florida State faces the University of Alabama-Birmingham at noon and South Florida at 4 p.m. in Tully Gym. Admission to both games is free with an FSU football ticket, or \$2 for adults and \$1 for students.