



Coach Norvell's return helped to sell Gadsden County standouts on FSU

SPORTS, 1B

TALLAHASSEE DEMOCRAT

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025 | TALLAHASSEE.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

'TOTAL BELIEF'



Florida State Seminoles forward Wrianna Hudson, left, celebrates with forward Jordynn Dudley after scoring a goal during the second half against the Texas Christian University Horned Frogs in a 2025 NCAA Women's College Cup semifinal match at CPKC Stadium on Dec. 5. JAY BIGGERSTAFF-IMAGN IMAGES

FSU on the cusp of another national title in Monday rematch with Stanford

Liam Rooney

Tallahassee Democrat | USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Brian Pensky tries not to think about winning a fifth national title for Florida State soccer and the second championship in his four seasons coaching the program.

That imagination leads to what Pensky described as unnecessary distractions for his No. 3 Seminoles, who are set to make an eighth national championship appearance after Wrianna Hudson's team-high 14th goal led FSU to a 1-0 win over TCU in the College Cup semifinals on Friday.

Awaiting the Seminoles in the national championship game is a familiar foe, No. 1 Stanford, the same program FSU beat in the 2023 national championship game. While Pensky tries not to think about the potential outcome of the match, he's 90 minutes away from turning those distracting thoughts into a reality that features five national titles in 11 years for the program.

"You know, we're all humans, so our minds start to drift right and go there, right? But I've been doing this long enough ... when my brain starts to go and think

about that stuff, those are only distractions, I turn it off," Pensky said.

"It's irrelevant. You can't get caught up in thinking of those things because then that becomes whether that adds pressure or whatever the case may be, it's irrelevant. What is relevant is how you do what you need to do in order to achieve the things we mentioned."

FSU's run to national title game

It hasn't been the typical road to the national title game for FSU, which crashed out in the opening round of the ACC tournament, ending a run of five consecutive conference tournament titles.

That, and two regular-season losses to Stanford and Notre Dame alongside a tie with Cal, led to a third seed in the NCAA tournament. That forced the program to play a pair of games on the road, only returning to Seminole Soccer Complex because of Ohio State's upset of Notre Dame.

See SOCCER, Page 5A

City poised to sell golf club land for \$1.25M

Elena Barrera

Tallahassee Democrat | USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

The city commission is poised to vote on the sale of the Capital City Country Club for \$1.25 million at the Dec. 10 meeting.

In September, the club wrote a letter asking the city to end its long-term, \$1-a-year lease and sell the property to the club so it can pull itself out of financial straits. The request sparked major community debate with many community members concerned about future developments impacting their neighborhoods and the lack of memorialization of the unmarked cemetery of Black slaves that is on the property.

Community members came out in force during the October city commission meeting to criticize the city for not properly honoring the unmarked graves, for moving too fast with the sale and for their willingness to consider selling it for only a little more than \$1 million.

Commissioner Jeremy Matlow has said the city is lowballing its property valuation to secure a favorable deal and warns of a "fire sale" trend of city assets. He said the commission is being primed to potentially sell one of the city's largest parcels for "pennies on the dollar for what your land is worth."

The public outcry led the commission to delay their decision until more facets of the sale were clearly laid out and city staff explored alternative options to selling. Now city staff are once again recommending commissioners sell the property, leaving elected leaders with a choice of whether to see the sale through or continue to debate what to do at the

See GOLF CLUB, Page 2A

Gallop Franklin II seeks Fla. House's top post

James Call

USA TODAY NETWORK - Florida

Democratic state Rep. Gallop Franklin II of Tallahassee wants to be Speaker of the Florida House.

Now, that's not likely, given the GOP's current supermajority there. But Franklin will settle for House Democratic Leader.

With lawmakers already meeting at the Capitol in preparation for the upcoming legislative session in January, Franklin notified the House Clerk he's a candidate for when the House selects a Speaker in November 2028 for the 2028-30 term.

That would put him up against Rep. Jennifer Canady, R-Lakeland, who's slated to become speaker then, assuming the Republicans hold a majority in the chamber.

Even Franklin admits it's unlikely Democrats will pick up 29 House seats between now and then for him to overtake Canady. (Republicans currently outnumber Democrats in the House 84-32 with four vacant seats.)

But, he said, as House Democratic Leader he would have the opportunity to refocus legislative debates on public service and away from being a platform "to score political points."

"People are sick and tired and disappointed because it becomes more about politics than providing services to your constituents," Franklin said. "If I'm fortunate to lead the caucus, my North Star will be to

See FRANKLIN, Page 2A

Subscriber-only eNewspaper

The eNewspaper is an electronic copy of your print newspaper. Enjoy every page by going to tallahassee.com/enewspaper or scan this code on your mobile device. You will also find late news and sports in the bonus sections. Check it out today!



Volume 120 | No. 288
Subscribe 800-999-2271
©2025 \$3.50



0 12409 01050 4