

SPORTS

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Vikings settle for split

Win opener in 12 innings; running out of time in bid for state tournament

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Its most exciting game of the season ended in a victory on Tuesday.

But once again, the St. Johns River State College softball team could not seal the deal on a doubleheader sweep.

Coming back twice, the Vikings defeated Seminole State College, 6-5, in the opening game of the Mid-Florida Conference doubleheader at home. But in the second game, Seminole bounced back from a 2-0 deficit to defeat the Vikings, 5-2, to hand them their seventh split of the season, and drop them to 7-13.

With just two conference doubleheaders left against Daytona State at home on Saturday and at Santa Fe on Thursday, the Vikings may need to sweep both to claim the fourth and final conference spot that would send them to the state tournament for the second straight year – something never accomplished in the program's fastpitch history.

The Vikings and Santa Fe sit tied in fifth place behind Florida State College-Jacksonville, which swept Santa Fe on Tuesday, to jump up to 7-11 in the conference with doubleheaders left against Seminole, front-

running Central Florida (which lost for only the second time this season Tuesday by splitting with Daytona State) and slumping Lake-Sumter.

"(Our team) knows they have to sweep these doubleheaders," Vikings coach Jill Semento said after her team went to 24-23, the third-best win total in program history behind last year's 33-22 team and the 2007 team's 26-35 mark. Both those teams qualified for the state tournament. "We try (to sweep), but we don't know what it is that keeps us from doing that. It's very frustrating. We should've swept FSC-J. We should've swept Santa Fe. We should've swept Daytona."

In the opening game, the Vikings rallied from down 4-2 to tie it in the seventh inning as Haley Wildes singled home Savannah Montgomery and Amanda Peck.

In the 10th inning, Seminole (33-16, 12-6) took a 5-4 lead when Kirstyn Oset singled home Claudia Pizzarelli. But in the bottom of the 10th, Chris Marasa delivered a sacrifice fly to knock in Wildes.

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Then in the 12th inning, with Peck starting at second as part of the international tiebreaker rules that take effect in the 10th inning,

Wildes sacrifice bunted Peck to third. Kayla Kight and Chris Marasa were intentionally walked to load the bases for Sydney Shows, who put a squeeze bunt down the first base line that scored Peck to win it.

Peck was 3-for-5 with three runs scored, while Shows was

2-for-6 with an RBI and Alandra Resendes was 2-for-4. Wildes, Montgomery and Marasa had one hit each.

The Vikings took a 2-0 lead in the first inning on a Hannah Sommers sacrifice fly and a bases-loaded hit batsman to Shows. But Seminole rallied back with a

three-run fourth inning, highlighted by a two-run single from Morgan Williams. Williams was 3-for-4 and sparked a 15-hit attack.

For the Vikings, held to six hits, Peck was 2-for-4 with a run scored, while Wildes, Marasa, Shows and Montgomery had one hit each.