

SPORTS

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SJR STATE SOFTBALL



Lake-Sumter's Summer Solovitch steals second ahead of the throw to SJR State's Maegan Stone.

CHRIS DEVITTO / Palatka Daily News

Longball Looms Large

Home runs key Lake-Sumter sweep as Vikings' losing streak reaches eight

Palatka Daily News

The home run ball played a big part of Thursday's Mid-Florida Conference softball doubleheader at St. Johns River State College.

Playing the biggest role was Bri Bennett.

Bennett hit a fifth-inning grand slam to account for all of Lakehawks' runs in a 4-3 first-game win, then delivered the crushing final blow with a two-run shot in the seventh inning to finish out a 6-3 win over the Vikings, dropping SJRSC to under .500 for the first time since early February at 24-25 and to 4-12 in the conference and four games behind fourth-place Santa Fe. The top four teams advance to the state tournament.

"Honestly, I couldn't tell you what's going

on," second-year Vikings coach Jill Semento said after her team's losing streak grew to eight, all conference matchups. "We do one thing right and the rest of it wrong. Whatever we do in practice we do right, we do it wrong in the game. We were hot in the beginning of the season and now we've cooled off."

The first-game grand slam off losing pitcher Madison Roeshink (11-11) came after two outs when the Lakehawks (20-32, 6-12) got a base hit, a dropped pop-up and a walk and Bennett made Roeshink pay with her grand slam.

The Vikings made it interesting when Kayla Kight and Selena Bezares hit back-to-back home runs and Maegan Stone took another shot for a ride to right-center field until it was hauled in right in front of the fence.

The Vikings jumped out to a 1-0 lead in the

second game on a Sydney Shows leadoff home run, but got just two runs the rest of the way. The Lakehawks took the lead and in the top of the seventh, it was Bennett who put the game away with a two-run home run.

Bennett had just those two hits, but drove in six runs total with them.

For the Vikings, Bezares was 2-for-3 with a run and an RBI in the first game, while Shows, Kight and Jessie Grissom had one hit each. In the second game, Kight was 2-for-2, while Shows finished 2-for-4. Christiana Marasa, Stone and Ta'Shylla Brockington had one hit apiece.

The Vikings look to turn things around Saturday at Florida State College-Jacksonville. The Vikings' last wins were a sweep of FSC-J at home on March 21.