

Late Gator Rally Tops FSU, 82-79

Seminoles Lead Most Of Way;
Emrick's 27 Proves Difference

Special to the Democrat

JACKSONVILLE — Florida's scrappy Gators overcame a 12-point deficit in the last eight minutes to hand Florida State Seminoles their first 1954 setback, 82-79, in a first-round Gator Bowl basketball thriller here last night.

A capacity crowd at Jacksonville's Swisher gymnasium watched FSU lead Florida for 36 minutes, then bow to a last-ditch Gator rally that rolled up 30 points in eight minutes.

Florida will meet Spring Hill

College of Mobile, Ala., 78-69 victor over Georgia in the tourney opener, for the fourth Gator Bowl crown tonight. FSU and Georgia battle for third place at 7:30 p.m.

At one point, with less than eight minutes to play, the Seminoles led Florida by 67-55. But Bob Emrick's uncanny pivot shooting and Sonny Powell's sparkling floor play brought the Gators out of the hole into the lead at 71-70.

There were four minutes left when Florida took the lead for the first time. The Gators never relinquished it.

Both teams started slow but Rick Benson and Dick Artmeier pushed FSU into a 45-36 halftime lead with some sensational long shooting. The Seminoles opened up fast in the second half and grabbed a 53-41 margin with four minutes gone.

EMRICK TAKES OVER

That's when Florida Coach John Mauer benched his big sophomore center, Lew Doss, and moved Emrick to the pivot spot. It was all Florida after that. The Gators simply fed Emrick, whose fadeaway jump shot from the keyhole ran up 18 points and iced the game for Florida.

Emrick finished with 27 points and Powell chipped in 19. Benson and Wernke netted 18 apiece for FSU, which had won five straight before meeting Florida. It was the sixth win for the Gators.

FSU	G	F	T	FLORIDA	G	F	T
Artmeier, f	5	2	12	Copeland, f	4	0	3
Benson, f	7	4	18	Emrick, f, c	12	3	27
Wursbch, f	0	2	2	Tchberry, f	3	2	8
Wold, c	2	10	14	Hodges, f	0	1	1
Williams, c	0	0	0	Doss, c	3	5	11
Oler, g	6	2	14	Powell, g	5	9	19
Wernke, g	6	4	16	Nims, g	2	4	8
Toomey, g	1	1	3	Nichols, g	0	0	0
Waites, g	0	0	0				

Totals 27 25 79 Totals 29 24 82
Halftime score: Florida State 45; Florida 36.

Free throws missed: Florida State—Artmeier 2, Benson 4, Toomey, Oler 2, Wernke. Florida—Emrick 3, Doss 3, Hodges, Powell 2, Nims 3.