

Lady Seminoles rally for state championship

TAMPA — Third baseman Kelly Shaw drove in the winning run in two come-from-behind victories as Florida State's softball team won its fifth consecutive AIAW state championship Saturday.

The Seminoles started the day with a 2-1 loss to Florida, which dropped them into the loser's bracket. FSU won the bracket, however, edging South Florida 6-5, with four runs in the bottom of the final inning.

Shaw's two-out single scored Linda Tyrell from second base for the winning run against South Florida.

FSU knocked off Florida 5-1 to force a second and deciding game. The Gators had handed FSU six of its nine losses this season.

Down 8-4 in the bottom of the seventh, FSU scored five runs, with Shaw driving in catcher Toni Donaldson for a 9-8 victory.

"The way we came back was the key to the whole thing," said FSU coach JoAnne Graf. "We needed to score to come from behind and we did. We were lucky that we were the home team and batted last in both of those close victories."

Florida State, now 49-9, got good hitting in the championship game from Shaw and Donaldson, who both went three-for-four, and shortstop Darby Cottle, who went two-for-three.

FSU, also the defending national champion, is expected to be the No. 1 seed in the AIAW Region 3 tournament, to be hosted by FSU and played at Tallahassee's Messer Field Friday and Saturday.