Gators Eliminate VPI From NCAA Baseball

MINNEAPOLIS (Special to Daily Press) — After soaring high on the strength of an earlier 31-game victory streak, Virginia Tech’s baseball satellite arched earthward with a resounding thud Saturday in the NCAA Mideast Regional Tournament.

Bases on balls proved the bugaboo as Florida’s Gators garnered a 9-4 verdict and ousted the Gobblers (0-2) from this double-elimination event which today produces the regional representative for the College World Series in Omaha.

Minnesota unleashed a 17-hit attack and Dan Morgan struck out seven batters as the Gophers hammered Central Michigan 13-2 to remain unbeaten.

Florida, riding a grand slam homer by Dean Empie, edged Central Michigan in an 11-3 donnybrook to eliminate the Chippewas and notch their second Saturday triumph.

The Gators, who lost to Minnesota 7-0 in the first round, meet the Gophers today for the title.

Virginia Tech lefty Mike Rhodes walked the first two batters in each of the first three innings. Five of those baserunners eventually scored to give the Southeast Conference team all it needed to subdue the independent Hokies from Blacksburg.

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Virginia Tech.................................. 030 000 001—4 9 1
Florida............................................. 221 003 10x—9 8 2

Rhodes, T. Puglisi (3), Berkey (7), Power (8) and Shelton; Crum and Shulock. W — Crum (8-4). L — Rhodes (5-2).

Home runs — Virginia Tech, Williams (9th, none or). Florida, McDonald (6th, 1-on).