

Viking softballers take fifth in CIAA

By Robin Sawyer

The Lady Vikings season came to an end last weekend with a 4-3 loss to North Carolina Central in the consolation final of the CIAA Tournament. While ECSU led the first five and two-thirds innings, the Lady Vikings had to settle for a fifth place finish in the conference tourney held in Winston-Salem.

ECSU opened the tournament with a Friday morning game against Fayetteville State University. The Lady Vikings were ousted from the winner's bracket after one game, losing 7-6 to FSU.

In their second game Friday, the Lady Vikings took on Virginia Union, and ECSU came away with a 7-3 win.

In the nightcap Friday night, ECSU played St. Paul's. In their third game of the day, the Lady Vikings won 5-3 to advance to Saturday competition.

Saturday morning ECSU played St. Augustine and was eliminated from title contention. Leading 1-0 through six and third innings, the Lady Vikings were turned back 6-1 when they gave up six runs in one inning.

The two wins Friday, however, were enough to qualify ECSU for the consolation final to determine final standings. While the Lady Vikings led the first five and a third innings, NCCU came up with a big inning in the fifth to take the 4-3 win and third place in the tournament, while ECSU came away with fifth place.

ECSU's pitcher, Jeana Gordon, was selected to the All-

CIAA Tournament first team for her performance on the mound for the Lady Vikings. Gordon also led the team offensively for the season with a .630 average.

Second baseman Eliza Stokes, the team's only senior, had a .508 average for the season, while third baseman Karen Woody compiled a .507 average.

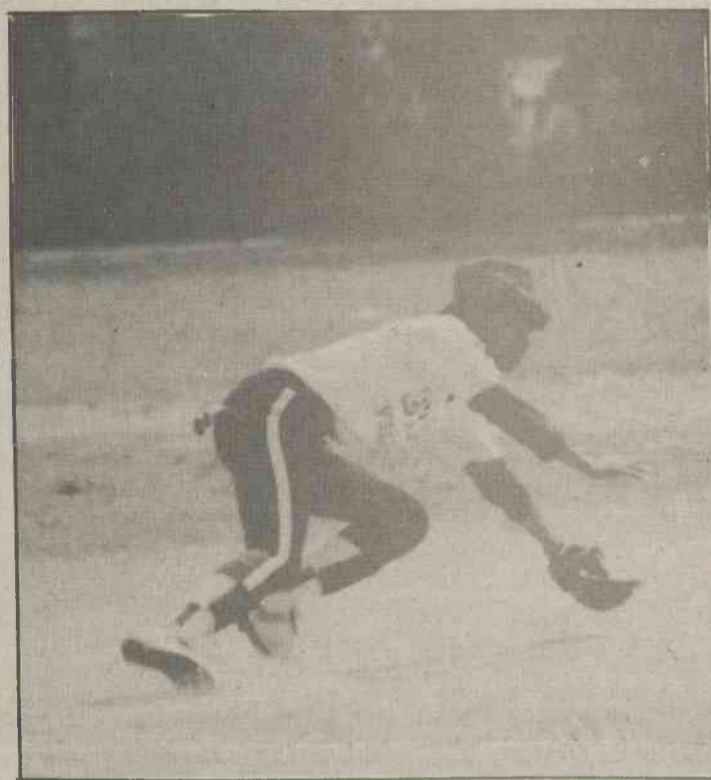
ECSU coach James Hogard said that he is "looking forward to next season" and hopes that he can "pick up a couple of pitchers and outfielders to round out the team."



Lady Viking pitcher Dee Soriano delivers a strike to the opposing team's batter. Soriano pitched the first half of the 1988 season for ECSU and compiled

a 3-2 record. At the plate Soriano hit a steady .420 to aid in the Viking offensive attack.

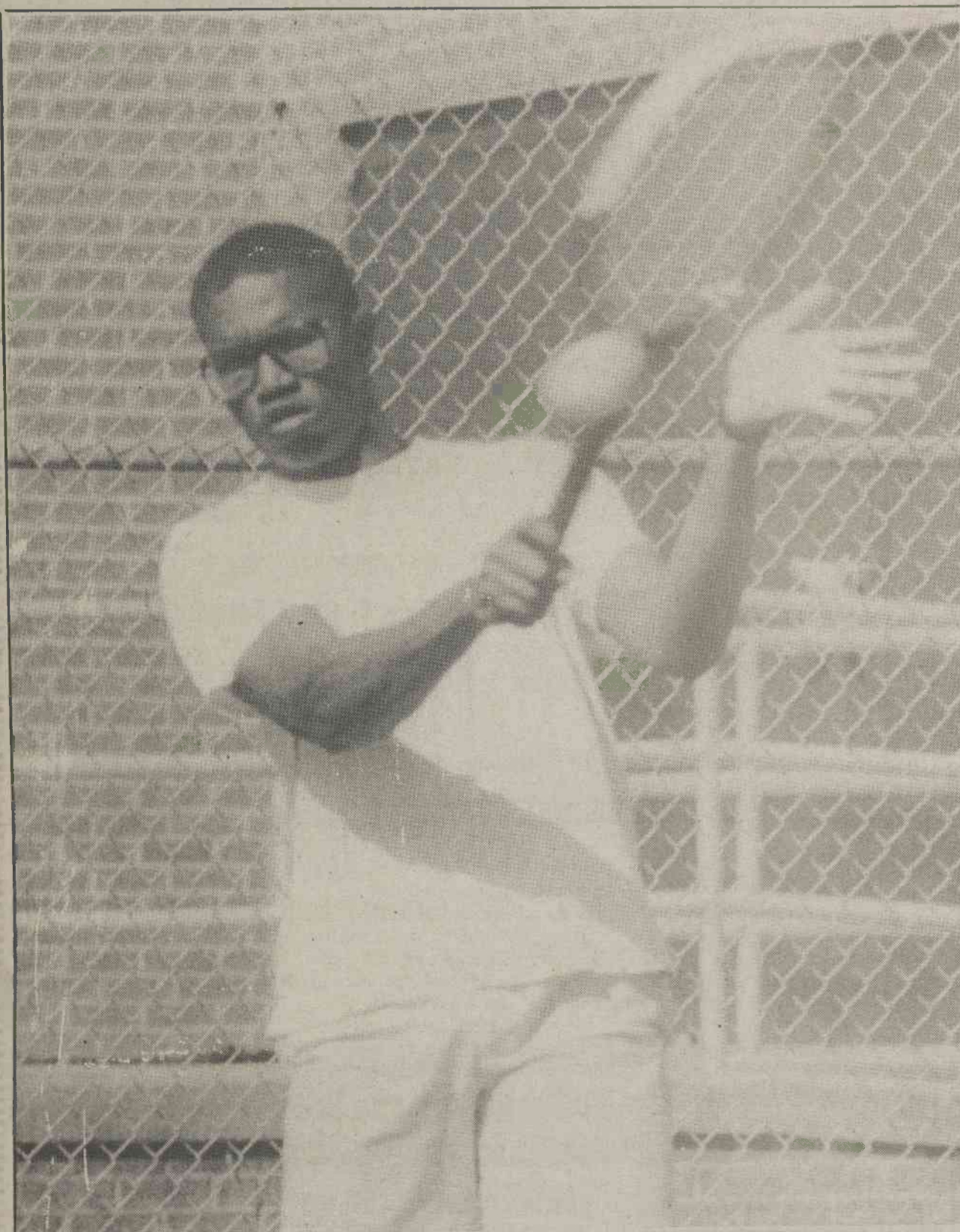
Photo by Richard McIntire



Lady Viking Angela Bobbit makes a diving catch in a home game early in the 1988 season. Bobbit was an offensive leader for ECSU's women's softball team, hitting .500 for the year.



The ECSU Lady Vikings watch intently, hoping that a fly ball will not be caught. The women's softball team placed fifth in the conference tournament last weekend in Winston-Salem.



Practice shot

Senior Melvin Hodges activates a topspin forehand while practicing before the Vikings trip to the CIAA Tournament in Raleigh. Hodges is one of four seniors on the ECSU tennis team.

Photo by Richard McIntire

Viking racqueteters say they need scholarships

The ECSU men's tennis team completed the 1988 season with a record of 2-8 and a fourth place finish in the CIAA Northern Division.

Coach Eugene O'Neal said he attributes the disappointing record to several different factors including inexperience.

"We had less experience this year than we had last year," said last year's captain, Melvin Hodges.

According to O'Neal, the Viking racqueteters lost two of last year's players who were expected to return — one transferred and one was ineligible.

"We're not able to recruit like we want," said O'Neal, referring to the fact that he is not able to give scholarships to tennis players, while most of the teams ECSU must play are at least partially scholarship-funded.

In the CIAA Tournament held last weekend in Raleigh, ECSU placed fourth in the Northern Division, although they did not win a match in the event. O'Neal was quick to point out that his team was, however, forced to play on clay, a surface in which most of his players were unfamiliar with.

Hampton and Livingstone were the tournament's top two finishers, apparently unaffected by the clay surface said O'Neal.

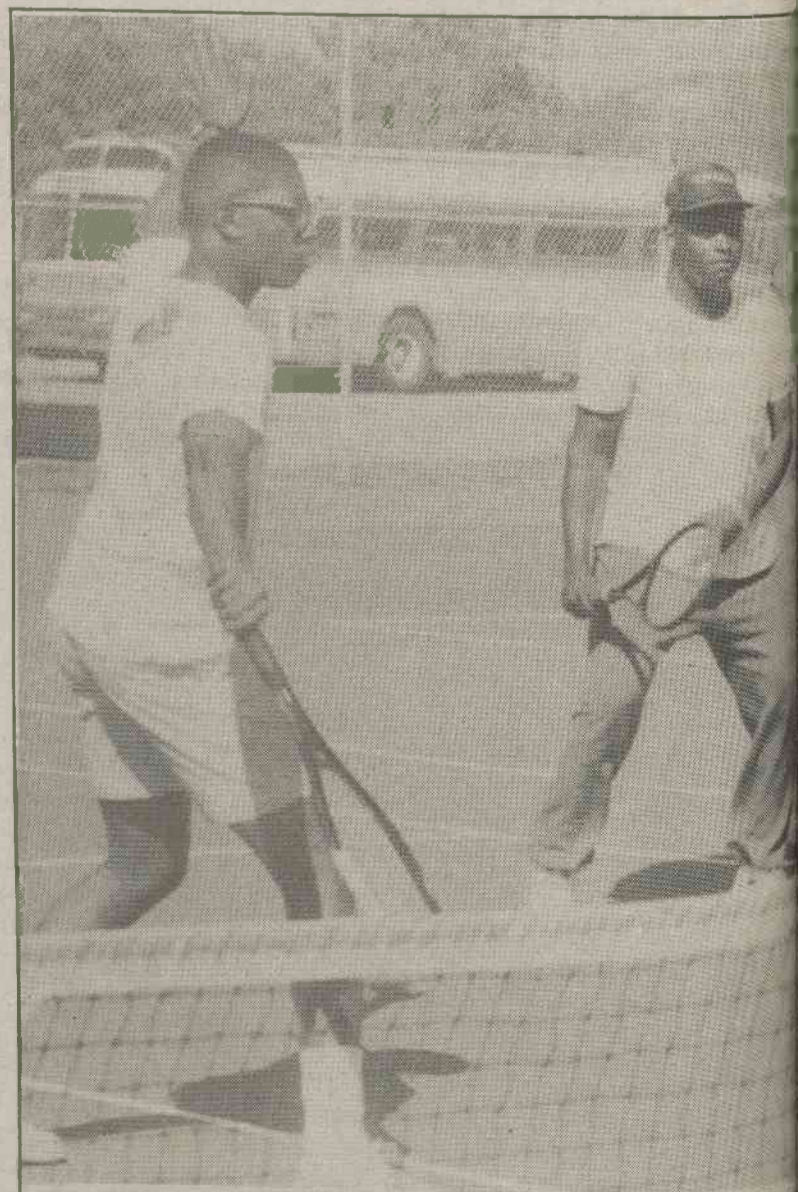
O'Neal added that Hampton's team is composed of scholarship players from Nigeria, Pakistan, and Brazil. Johnson C. Smith and Livingstone College are also recruiting players from abroad of such caliber that non-scholarship teams are unable

to compete against them.

"More money has to be put into the program," said O'Neal, adding that scholarships might help make ECSU "more of a contender."

Four members of the rac-

queteters will be graduating this semester — Mike Chambliss, Robert Goodman (captain), Melvin Hodges, and Douglas Howard, while Anthony Nixon, Richard J. McIntire, and Hayes Robbins will return for the 1989 season.



Viking racqueteters Anthony Nixon (right) and Melvin Hodges practice their net game. ECSU's tennis team had a 2 and 8 record this year.

Photo by Richard McIntire