

SPORTS

St. Johns sweeps Mid-Florida baseball awards

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St. Johns River State College swept the individual awards and had 11 players recognized overall in Mid-Florida Conference baseball voting on Thursday.

The 44-8, three-time MFC champion Vikings had the player of the year in first baseman Nathaniel Lowe, the pitcher of the year in Kyle Kalbaugh, fireman of the year in Tyler Carr, defensive player of the year in center

fielder Myles Straw and coach of the year in Ross Jones.

Lowe, a sophomore, batted .374 with a team-high 16 home runs and 50 RBI this season. He has nine doubles and has drawn 47 walks, almost twice that of his next closest teammates.

Working primarily in relief, Kalbaugh was 10-1 with two saves and a 1.60 earned-run average as a sophomore. SJR State's only lefthander, Kalbaugh struck out 58 and walked 14

in 73 innings.

Carr, a freshman, set the Vikings' single-season saves record with 12. He was 5-2 with a 3.08 ERA. He struck out 38 and walked 12 in 38 innings.

Straw posted a .980 fielding percentage while patrolling center field as a sophomore. He hit a team-high .429, batting leadoff most of the season, and was second on the squad with 15 stolen bases.

St. Johns finished the regular sea-

son with a No. 1 state ranking and a No. 2 national ranking under Jones, who was also MFC coach of the year in 2014. The Vikings were ranked first in the NJCAA for a few weeks. The No. 1 rankings, both state and national, were program firsts. Three straight conference championships match the achievement of John Tindall's 1966-68 teams.

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Vikings

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Kalbaugh, Lowe, Straw and starting pitcher Dustin Hersey (8-0,

2.17) were first-team, all-conference selections. Starting pitcher Andy Toelken (7-1, 2.31), right fielder Wes Weeks (.317), shortstop Kyle Hann (.333, 20 stolen bases) and third baseman Hunter Alexander (.316, 10 home runs, 38 RBI) were

second-teamers. Pitcher Daniel Williams (4-0, 1.91) and outfielder-DH Alec Dowell (.293) received honorable mention.

The Vikings open state tournament play in Lakeland next Friday against the Suncoast Conference

runnerup, State College of Florida/Sarasota-Manatee.

"It's all about going down there and getting it done," Jones said. "All the individual awards are nice, but it's not done without the guy on your right and your left."