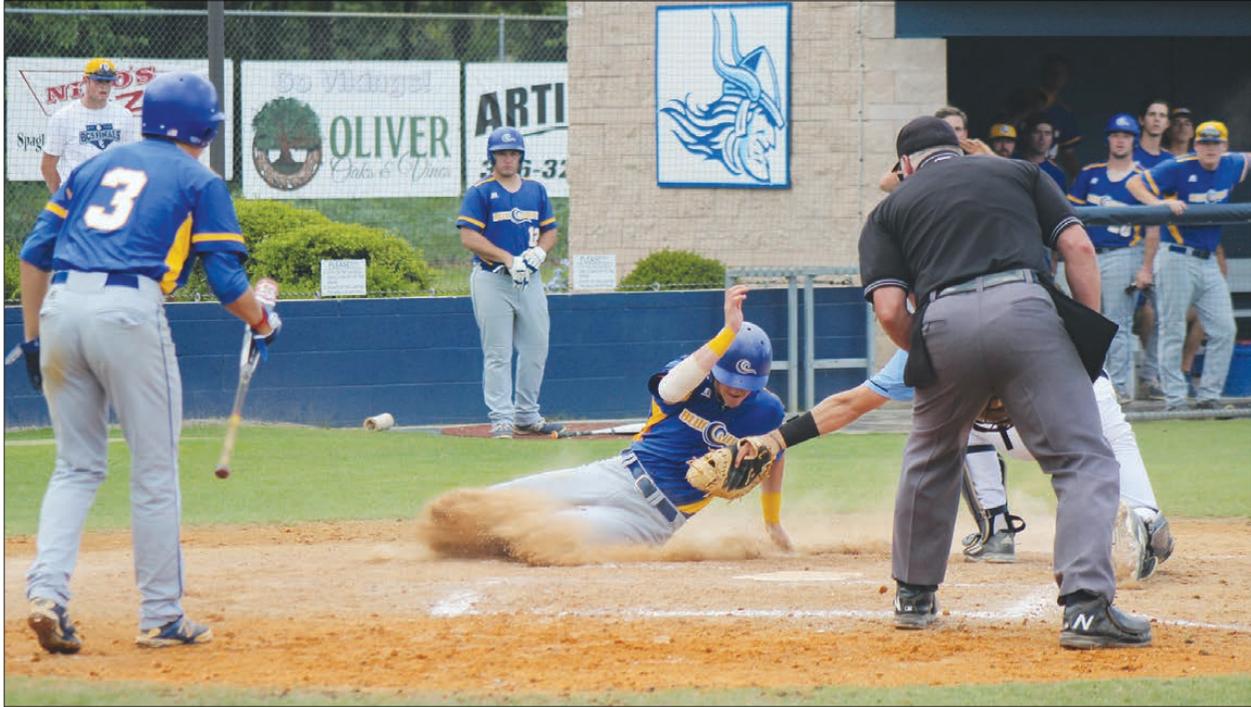


# SPORTS

## ON THE TAG



ANDY HALL / Palatka Daily News

FSCJ's James Fitzpatrick is tagged out at home by SJR State catcher Jimbo Reemsnyder.

# Much-Needed Rain

## Weather brings early end to weak performance in defeat for SJR State

BY ANDY HALL  
*Palatka Daily News*

**T**he final Mid-Florida Conference baseball game of the season for St. Johns River State College and Florida State College-Jacksonville was called by rain in the middle of the sixth inning Friday at Tindall Field.

It could have been called for lack of interest, at least on the part of the home team.

The state tournament-bound Vikings sleepwalked to an 8-1 loss and it wasn't that close. FSCJ led 13-1 after a five-run sixth, but the bottom half was washed out and the official score reflected the last completed inning.

St. Johns (38-11, 16-7) had one hit, Hunter Alexander's leadoff home run in the fifth; he

was the only Viking to get past first base. They weren't charged with any errors, but coach Ross Jones cited three misplayed balls that went for hits. The Blue Wave (15-28, 10-14) had 10 official hits, plus three that were wiped away by the weather in the sixth.

"We didn't show up. We just didn't show up, bottom line," Jones said.

Sure, the Vikings' ticket was already punched for state, but that was the case on Monday night when they rallied in the ninth for a 6-5 victory over MFC champion Santa Fe — the top-ranked team in the state and in the nation.

"We didn't have any energy (Friday). It was a meaningless game and they played like it was meaningless," Jones said.

Not FSCJ, which got a three-run homer

from Christian Jones to highlight a six-run second inning. No. 8 batter Cale Gibson was 2-2 when he began the sixth with a home run, but that one was negated.

The loss went to starter Hunter Jones (2-2), who was done after the second inning. Daniel Williams pitched two scoreless innings before the Blue Wave reached him for two runs on four straight two-out hits in the fifth. Three other relievers labored to get through the sixth.

With almost a month to go before the state tournament begins in Lakeland on May 15, coach Jones is looking to line up a handful of games in hopes of keeping his team sharp and removing the taste of Friday's performance. Already scheduled is a May 6-8 series at Chipola.