

SPORTS

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— ASSOCIATED PRESS

SJRSC

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“We can mix and match,” said Jones, who used two lefthanders and two righthanders. “The quality of our arms – on a Sunday.”

After Smith hammered Steele’s 2-1 delivery out to left in the third inning, SJR State was relatively quiet until the seventh, when Nick Koslowski led off with an opposite-field single to left and Michael Koenig doubled down the line in left. Chipola reliever Riley Cabral kept the Vikings at bay with a popout, a strikeout and a groundout.

The Indians’ five pitchers recorded 17 strikeouts. Steele had nine over the first five innings.

The 16th strikeout began the bottom of the 10th. Owens and Smith both walked and Kerry Carpenter was hit by a pitch to load the bases. Andrew Grogan struck out Cole Perry, but Broughton drilled a 2-1 delivery into right to end the game.

Koenig and Broughton had two hits apiece. The other St. Johns hits were Smith’s home run and singles by Koslowski and Carpenter.

SJR State outhit Gulf Coast, 9-8, on Saturday, but there was no overcoming the avalanche of errors.

Jimmy Goldsmith went 2-4 with an RBI and Palatka freshman Clellan Barnes had a run-scoring double for the Vikings. Carpenter was 2-5. Koenig, Owens, Smith and Scott Kobos had one hit apiece.

The loss went to Trevin Eubanks (1-1), the first of four SJR State pitchers.

The Vikings travel to Polk State on Wednesday.



ANDY HALL / Palatka Daily News

Starting pitcher Clay Helvey throws during Sunday’s game at home against Chipola College.

Classic Finish

SJRSC pushes run across in 10th to nip No. 1 Chipola, 2-1

BY ANDY HALL
Palatka Daily News

It was the kind of junior college baseball one hopes to see in Lakeland in May, only this was Tindall Field on Feb. 12.

It was, indeed, a classic finish to the Capital City Bank Classic as Sunday afternoon gave way to Sunday night.

St. Johns River State College 2, Chipola College 1, 10 innings.

Josh Broughton punched a two-out, bases-loaded single to right with two out in the 10th, scoring Nick Owens as the sixth-ranked Vikings clipped the state’s top-ranked team and the one that eliminated them last May in the state tournament at Lakeland.

Four St. Johns pitchers combined to strike out 15 Indians two days after their teammates whiffed 17 Broward batters. Chipola left 14 on base, nine in scoring position.

Miami transfer Justin Smith homered in the third off Vanderbilt transfer Kevin Steele for the Vikings’ first run. The Indians got on the board in the fourth when Andrew Bechtold came in on a sacrifice fly that might have been an extra-base hit but for Broughton’s diving catch in right center.

“That’s a great baseball team over there and we had to be flawless,” said SJR State coach Ross

Jones, motioning to the visitors’ dugout. “I’m extremely pleased with the win. I guarantee you (Chipola coach) Jeff Johnson’s on that bus feeling good about the way his team played, just like I would have if we had lost.”

The performance stood in striking contrast to Saturday night, when St. Johns made seven errors – and by Jones’ estimation, bungled at least three potential double plays – in a 9-2 loss to Gulf Coast State College. Sunday’s win improved the Vikings to 11-4 while dropping Chipola to 7-3.

They made one error Sunday – a potential killer with two out and nobody on in the 10th – but after Chipola went on to load the bases on Brady Wolfred’s double and a walk to Trey Dawson, Jones called on his fourth pitcher of the game, Jagger McCoy (1-1), who served up a fly ball for the third out.

“We executed pitches all day,” Jones said. “That’s why they left 14 on base.”

Starter Clay Helvey, struck out seven, walked five and allowed one run on three hits over the first five innings. Andrew Vaccacio followed with three scoreless innings, striking out seven without a walk and allowing two hits. Zach Greene pitched an inning and two thirds before giving way to McCoy.

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