

SPORTS

SJR STATE BASEBALL



ANDY HALL / Palatka Daily News

Zach Blankenship threw five shutout innings for SJR State Saturday against Seminole.

Loss by the Lake

Vikings club Seminole again, but stumble at Lake-Sumter

Palatka Daily News

Two days after completing an authoritative three-game sweep of Seminole State College, the St. Johns River State College baseball team hit its first bump in the road to challenging for the Mid-Florida Conference championship.

Maybe it was more of a sideways spin.

Three walks and a quirky bloop double keyed a five-run eighth inning for host Lake-Sumter State in an 8-5 victory over the Vikings on a windy Monday afternoon in Leesburg.

SJR State completed the Seminole series with a 10-0 rout at home on Saturday – the third straight win that ended in seven on the 10-run rule – only to cough up a 5-3 lead in the eighth on Monday. The Vikings outhit the LakeHawks 12-10 but were a feeble 3-14 with runners in scoring position, striking out six times.

“You can’t win a whole lot of games doing that,” said St. Johns coach Ross Jones, whose club is 18-10 overall and 3-1 in the MFC. It was the conference opener for Lake-Sumter, which is 9-13 overall.

On a day the teams combined for 11 extra-base hits – the LakeHawks’ Jesse Getford was 3-4, missing the cycle by a single – the Vikings were playing

deep in the pivotal eighth. But there was no defense for the three walks or for a two-run, bloop double that dropped inches fair in right and took a wicked sideways spin.

“On most days, it would have been foul, but that’s baseball,” Jones said. “We didn’t make the pitches that put people away. The one good thing was Scott Kobos made his first start in 17 days. We had to keep his pitch count down, but he threw really well.”

Kobos, who also plays center field, had not pitched since landing on a shoulder making a catch against South Georgia Feb. 19. The lefthander threw five innings Monday, allowing two earned runs on five hits, striking out six and walking one.

The loss went to Andrew Vaccacio (2-1), the fourth of five SJR State pitchers.

The Vikings’ Kerry Carpenter was 3-4 with a double. Josh Broughton was 2-5 with a home run and two RBI, Jimmy Goldsmith 2-4 with a double and one RBI. The other hits were doubles by Cole Perry and Nick Koslowski and singles by Nick Owens, Michael Koenig and Justin Smith. Koenig and Koslowski each had an RBI.

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“They probably threw 75-80 percent breaking stuff. We knew they could pitch,” said Jones of Lake-Sumter, which comes to Tindall Field on Wednesday.

An eight-run second inning pretty much polished off Seminole in Saturday’s home game. The Vikings outscored the Raiders 37-3 for the series.

Jimbo Reemsnyder was 3-3 with a double and an RBI in a 10-hit offense. Koenig was 2-5 with a double and three RBI. Owens, Smith, Carpenter, Broughton and Koslowski all singled.

Starter Zach Blankenship (2-0) gave St. Johns five shutout innings, striking out five, walking one and allowing five hits. Trevin Eubanks and Zach Greene each threw an inning of hitless relief.