

SPORTS

Erratic St. Johns splits with S. Georgia

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The bottom line was the same. The outlook afterward was radically different.

The St. Johns River State College baseball team split with South Georgia State at Tindall Field Sunday, rallying to win the opener in the bottom of the seventh, 8-7, then dropping the second game, 3-0.

It was the second split with the Hawks in three days for the Vikings, who lost Friday's opener 5-4 before coming back to win the second game, 15-1, at Douglas, Ga. They take an 11-6 record into tonight's home game with the Rollins College junior varsity.

It's anybody's guess how they'll play.

Where St. Johns rang up 20 hits in Friday's split – 10 for extra bases and six home runs – it managed only seven hits in two games on Sunday. The Vikings were two-hit in the second game and had only one baserunner over the last three innings.

Zach Mainor struck out eight and walked one on the way to a shutout for the Hawks, who went home 8-6.

"We've got to get better," said SJR State coach Ross Jones, whose team begins Mid-Florida Conference play at Seminole State March 3. "Their guy had all three (pitches) going, but he's not a conference starter. What are we going to do when the season starts?"

"Not a competitive effort today. I guess it's too much to ask to play six or seven competitive games in a row."

The Vikings did come back from a 7-2 deficit in Sunday's opener, tying the game with a five-run sixth and getting the decisive run in the seventh.

Francis Villaman walked and Riley Wash was hit by a pitch to start the Viking sixth. Joe Gunn singled up the middle, scoring Villaman. A walk to Joey Bellini loaded the bases, then Kerry Carpenter hustled his way to a double, scoring Wash and Gunn to bring SJR State within 7-5. Bellini scored on a passed ball to make it a one-run game and after two more walks again loaded the bases, Pablo Cedeno hit into a double play that brought Carpenter home to make it 7-7.

South Georgia's Caleb Moss (2-1) gave up a couple of one-out walks in the seventh and Bellini chopped a single into right to load the bases and bring on the .561-hitting Carpenter, who lofted a fly ball to right. The throw home bounced wide of the plate and Wash scored the winning run.

Carpenter had three RBI in the first game, bringing his state-leading total to 29. He also leads the state with seven home runs and a .561 batting average, even though he was 1-6 Sunday.

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The win went to the third St. Johns pitcher, Jagger McCoy

(1-0), who allowed one run on two hits with three strikeouts and a walk over two and a third innings.

The Vikings had only one hit after Bellini's leadoff double in the second game, a fourth-in-

ning single by Jimmy Goldsmith.

Starter Matt Marini (1-2) took the loss, pitching into the sixth with five strikeouts and one walk. He allowed three runs, all earned, on five hits.