

SPORTS

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Vikings held to three hits on frustrating day in Jacksonville

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St. Johns River State College didn't allow an earned run and had runners on base every inning but the ninth in

Monday's Mid-Florida Conference baseball game at Florida State College-Jacksonville.

Alas for the Vikings, they allowed four unearned runs and got only one runner home, losing for the third time in four games.

The 4-1 defeat dropped them three games behind first-place Santa Fe in the loss column. SJR State was held to three hits, all singles, which falling to 26-11 overall and 12-5 in the conference. Central Florida (21-11-1. 10-5), which took two of three from St.

Johns last week, is even with the Vikings in the loss column.

SJR State turned five double plays while beating FSCJ 6-3 at home on Saturday and plays the Blue Wave

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(14-19, 4-9) again at Tindall Field Wednesday afternoon.

"It was one of those days. We hit the ball hard right at people," coach Ross Jones said. "We had several opportunities. We had runners every single inning but the ninth, runners in scoring position three different innings."

The only one who scored was Ray Gonzalez, who was hit by the first pitch of the game. He took second when Joey Bellini singled up the middle, third on Kerry Carpenter's deep fly ball to center and came in on a wild pitch after Justin Farmer walked.

In a complete-game performance, Eric Crawford (4-2) allowed just two hits after the first inning, singles by Farmer and Pablo Ceden. He and got

all the offense he needed after the Vikings' only error opened the door in the fifth. The Wave got all their runs in the fifth, two from Logan Nugent's double off SJR State starter Jaison Heard (3-3).

"A play you make 100 times out of 100 and we don't make it," Jones said. "We drop a fly ball in left and don't make another play that could go either way and it's four unearned runs. But you've got to make a pitch to get out of the inning and we didn't."

That aside, Jones was encouraged by Heard's work after he was shelled in the first inning of last Wednesday's 20-6 loss to Central Florida. He struck out three, walked one and allowed six hits over four and two-third innings. Jagger McCoy and Luke Sutko combined for three and a third innings of scoreless relief.

"Now we've got to come back and win the series," Jones said.

The Vikings climbed out of a

3-0 hole on Saturday to take down FSCJ at Tindall Field.

Nick Romano hit a two-run homer in the fourth. Jose Varela scored the tying run when Carpenter was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded and the tie was broken with a three-run seventh that included singles by Riley Wash, Gonzalez, Bellini and Farmer and a sacrifice bunt by Varela.

The double plays complemented the pitching of Darin Kilfoyl and Matt Marini, who scattered eight hits. Marini (5-2) entered a tie game in the sixth and picked up the win.

"I think we played well. We pitched well, defended the field well," Jones said. "Darin's getting stronger. We didn't have really good at-bats the first two innings, but we came around."

Bellini went 3-4 with one RBI in a 10-hit offense. Ceden was 2-4 with a double. The other hits were Romano's home run and singles by Gonzalez, Farmer, Wash and Joe Gunn.