

SJR State Baseball



FRAN RUCHALSKI / Palatka Daily News

Shown bunting against Lake-Sumter March 4, Ray Gonzales drew a bases-loaded walk for the only SJR State run Friday at Central Florida.

It Doesn't Add Up

Ten hits, five walks, but Vikings strand 15 in 2-1 league loss to Patriots

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Do the math: Ten hits, five walks, five errors and three stolen bases equal how many runs? Surely more than one.

Not necessarily, it turns out.

A single run – off a bases-loaded walk – was all the St. Johns River State College baseball got out of the aforementioned opportunities Friday in a 2-1 loss to Mid-Florida Conference leader Central Florida in Ocala.

The Vikings (22-13, 7-7) stranded 15 baserunners, 11 in scoring position.

Typical of their afternoon was the ninth inning, when Michael Rosario singled with two out and pinch-runner A.J. Mathis raced from first to third on a steal and a throwing error – only for the game to end with a strikeout. It was the seventh time in the game SJR State struck out with a runner in scoring position.

The Vikings were 2 for 12 in such opportunities and neither hit produced a run – one batter advancing from second to third on an infield hit, the other cut down at the plate. St. Johns scored only in the fifth, when Ray Gonzalez drew a bases-loaded walk.

“Their pitchers were really good arms and they made pitches, but we’ve got to find a way,” said SJR State coach Ross Jones. “The story today is we were

just anemic.

“We pitched great. (Jordan) Dubberly was good for the five outs he got. Luke Sutko threw good. (Connor) Centalla threw the longest he’s thrown all year.”

Dubberly, who Jones has called his team’s best pitcher during conference play, left with a sore shoulder with two out in the second inning and his status is unknown. Luckily for the Vikings, they don’t have another MFC game until April 6 against Florida State College-Jacksonville.

Sutko got St. Johns to the fourth before Jones summoned his closer, Centalla (4-3), for an unusually long stint.

Langston Provitt was 2-4 with the game’s only extra-base hit, a double, to lead the Vikings’ 10-hit offense. Rosario and Ryan Romano were both 2-5. Gonzalez, Bubba Sangster, Riley Wash and Chase Malloy all singled.

Ranked first in the state and fifth in the nation, Central Florida improved to 31-6 and 10-5, two and a half games in front of fourth-place St. Johns.

“It’s a crazy year. The first-place team has five losses and the last-place teams (Daytona State and FSCJ) have seven,” Jones said. “Our conference is far and away the best in the state.”

The Vikings have a nonconference game today with Pasco-Hernando State at Tindall Field.