

SPORTS

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B SECTION

Vikings finish Abraham Baldwin in time for Super Bowl

Five home runs for SJR State, which has not trailed in 7-0 start

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Everything worked for the St. Johns River State College baseball team Sunday.

Franco Aleman pitched five no-hit innings in the opener of the Vikings' doubleheader with Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. Other St. Johns pitchers were almost as tough on the Stallions from Tifton, Ga.

SJR State hit five home runs over two games. The Vikings never trailed and have yet to fall behind this season.

Even the weather cooperated and everyone but the Stallions could get home in time for the Super Bowl.

The bottom line was a 9-1, 11-2

sweep that left St. Johns 7-0 with the Edward Waters College junior varsity due in town today. The Vikings tamed the Tigers 12-1 when the teams met a week ago and even with the back side of the bullpen doing most of the pitching, a repeat can be expected in their final performance before leaving for the Kevin Miller Classic at Gulf Coast State College.

"We've got one more tuneup, maybe you could call it, and then we go to Panama City and see what we're made of," said SJR State coach Ross Jones, who happily went through a checklist of Sunday's achievements.

"Franco threw the ball really well and (game two starter) Cameron Serada, what a job he did," Jones said "Offensively, we had double-digit hits both games and scored 20 runs. For the most part, we played very good defense."



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Pictured in a Jan. 25 game, Franco Aleman threw five no-hit innings for St. Johns on Sunday afternoon.

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Aleman (1-0) struck out seven and walked none over the first five innings of the opener; an error and a hit batsman in the first inning were all that kept him from perfection. The University of Florida signee has yet to allow a run in two starts with St. Johns. ABAC was hitless until greeting Viking reliever Nic Daniels with a home run in the sixth tinning. Daniels and Jason Gonzalez worked an inning apiece in relief.

Ben Spittler's grand slam to right was the first of St. Johns' five home runs on the day, igniting a five-run third inning that also included an RBI single by Charlie Welch. Spittler was the first batter to clear the new, higher fence at Tindall Field.

Michael Rosario's two-run shot to right followed in the fourth inning and Andre James delivered a two-run single in the fifth.

Spittler, James and Ioe Becker were all 2-3 in the first game, Spittler with a home run and a double. The other Viking hits were Rosario's home run, a dou-

ble by Juan Jaime and singles by Welch and Chase Malloy.

Serada (1-0) allowed a run on three hits over the first four innings of the second game, striking out five and walking none. Stephen Halstead struck out five in the fifth and sixth innings, giving up a run on one hit and three walks. Jackson Hodnick pitched a scoreless seventh.

"Stephen Halstead threw the ball very well. That's the best he's thrown," Jones said. "He got squeezed a little bit (on the walks)."

The Vikings scored four runs in the first, getting a three-run double from Chase Sanguinetti and a sacrifice from Spittler. Gerardo Rodriguez followed in the second with a solo home run in his first at-bat for SJR State. Rosario hit his second home run of the afternoon in the fourth inning and Ryan Romano had a two-run blast in the fifth. Sean McArdle hit a two-run single and a wild pitch for another run home in the sixth.

Rosario was 2-3 in the second game. In addition to the three home runs, the Vikings got doubles from Sanguinetti and J.J. Sousa and singles from Spittler, McArdle and Malloy.