

# SPORTS

## John Tindall Classic



Photos by ANDY HALL / Palatka Daily News

Above, Charlie Welch hit a two-run double in SJR State's seven-run fourth inning Sunday afternoon. Below, Franco Aleman struck out nine in six innings.

# Like Night and Day

### Sloppy Saturday night loss gives way to sparkling Sunday win for St. Johns

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**T**hey were as different as night and day, which, coincidentally, is when they were played.

St. Johns River State College made four errors, stranded seven runners and let Hillsborough CC do all its dirty work with just three hits in a 4-2 loss to the Hawks on a cold Saturday night at the John Tindall Baseball Classic. The Vikings turned it around on a sunny Sunday afternoon with dominant pitching, errorless defense and a big-hit offense in a 9-2 beating of East Georgia College, going 3-1 for the classic and improving to 15-7 overall.

They moved up a notch to No. 7 in the state coaches' poll released Monday. Chipola College slipped from first to third in the same poll and after their own discouraging defeat



Saturday night, the Indians' coach called SJR State counterpart Ross Jones.

"One of my best friends in the world, Jeff Johnson, calls me and asked me what happened," Jones said. "I told him and he said, 'Coach, we did the same thing.'"

"Today (Sunday) was a lot bet-

ter. I could tell watching them walk through the gate that everything was different."

The Vikings didn't lose focus against East Georgia (5-9) even after a seven-run fourth inning that all but closed the door. Not only were they error-free, they turned two double plays. Franco Aleman (3-1) buckled down after a shaky start and three relievers pitched one scoreless inning apiece.

Aleman struck out nine, walked none and allowed two runs on six hits over six innings before scouts eager to see the 6-foot-6, 230-pound University of Florida signee who came to St. Johns after one season at Florida International.

"People expect so much out of him," Jones said. "He graduated high school a year early and should be a freshman. You're not just seeing area scouts here, you're seeing front-office guys."

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## Classic

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SJR State sent 11 batters to the plate in the monster fourth inning. The big blow was a two-run double by Charlie Welch and it was Nick Tripp's leadoff double that got things going. Ryan Romano, August Haymaker and Sandon Witt all singled, Romano and Witt for an RBI apiece. The Bobcats also made three errors, walked two batters and hit another.

Romano and Haymaker each wound up 2-3, Romano with two RBI. Witt was 2-5 with an RBI. The other St. Johns hits were doubles by Welch, Tripp and Andre James and a single by Chase Sanguinetti.

The Vikings struck for two runs on three hits in the first inning of the Hillsborough game, but only got two runners as far as second base the rest of the way, both with two out.

Welch was 2-3 with one RBI, Chase Malloy 2-4 with a double. James, Michael Rosario, Ben Spittler and Josh Haygood all singled.

Rosario (0-2) struck out six, but walked three and hit a batter over the first four innings. The Vikings made three errors over that stretch, including a bad pickoff throw by Rosario.

The Vikings enter their final week of nonconference play with two games against Tallahassee – on the road Wednesday, at home Thursday – and a Saturday home game against the Rollins junior varsity.

"We've played a lot of baseball – five games a week," Jones said. "Having these tournaments, great as it is, we're not taking batting practice, not taking infield. I told the guys (Saturday), 'You think you're tired now, just wait.'"