

SPORTS

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B SECTION

Mistake-prone St. Johns drops to 0-2 in conference

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It was a comedy of errors, albeit an unfunny one for the St. Johns River State College baseball team and none of its errors were official.

Just like that, the Vikings are 0-2 in the Mid-Florida Conference after a 13-5 loss to Lake-Sumter that was halted after seven innings by the mercy rule at Tindall Field Wednesday night.

"Just bad defense," said SJR State coach Ross Jones, whose team is 16-10 overall and has lost three of its

last four, the one win an uneven effort last Saturday against the Rollins College junior varsity. He could not remember the last time St. Johns started 0-2 in conference.

"They got three hits on mental errors. Those three hits turned into six runs. Jackson's (Spiller, the starting pitcher) competing his tail off, but he's gassed and throwing stressful pitches because nobody's playing behind him."

Misplayed bunts helped the LakeHawks (13-10, 2-0) to four runs

in the second inning. The Vikings scored four in the home half and got a solo home run from Nick Tripp in the third inning, but Lake-Sumter wasn't done. The visitors scored in every inning but the first and fifth.

Trailing 8-5, SJR State loaded the bases with one out in the bottom of the fourth, but the inning ended with a strikeout and a line drive snagged in center field.

"That's been the story of us. When you're struggling, that's the kind of stuff that happens," Jones said. "The

only thing we can do is come back (in practice Thursday) and go get 'em."

Tripp was 2-3 with the home run and Michael Rosario had a two-run single to lead six-hit offense for the Vikings. Charlie Welch, Ben Spittler and August Haymaker had one hit apiece.

The first of four pitchers, Spiller (3-2) took the loss.

St. Johns completes the three-game set with Lake-Sumter in Leesburg on Friday.