

# Home is sweet as Seminoles sweep a pair

By BOB COHN

Democrat sports writer

Returning to the comforts of home, the Florida State baseball Seminoles looked around, smiled at the friendly surroundings and took a doubleheader from Oakland University (Mich.) 15-6 and 6-2 on Wednesday.

The Seminoles, now 24-4 on the season, took advantage of a couple of notable pitching performances and some timely hitting to snap out of the doldrums created by last weekend's dismal road trip to New Orleans and Mobile, where they dropped three of four games to Tulane and South Alabama.

In the first game, pitcher Joe Nichols came out of the bullpen in the third inning to do some credible relief work and gain his third victory of the season.

Nichols came on after starter Mike Bretz, coming off an ankle injury, lasted only two batters, and Jim Miller had his problems too.

In four innings of work, Nichols made only one mistake, a two-run homer to Dave Robinson in the sixth. The blast, however, came with FSU in a 12-4 lead, so it made little difference.

**OAKLAND JUMPED** on Bretz and Miller for runs in the first two frames, while the Seminoles, on a Bob Benda homer and Blane McDonald's run-scoring out in the first, had three of their own.

It stayed that way, 4-3 Oakland, until the fifth. Pioneer starter Dave Jones had retired 12 in a row, but the Seminoles decided enough was enough, and ganged up on the right-hander for nine runs.

The Seminoles sent 15 men to the plate while hitting nothing stronger than singles. Mark Gilbert tied a school record held by many, by rapping two hits in the inning, while Benda had the big hit, a two-run single that broke the tie and made it 6-4.

But while the win was sweet enough, Bretz' brief and unhappy performance is a troublesome sign to Coach Woody Woodward, who had hoped for a strong showing.

Bretz walked a man and hit one before leaving with a sore elbow (the ankle is fine) and is now once again a question mark.

"WE REALLY don't know what it is," Woodward said. "We'll have a trainer and a doctor take a look. It might be something that will take a

little more than rest to straighten out."

But another pitcher having his problems so far, Rick Holloway, can feel a little bit better. Woodward sent him in to pitch the seventh, and he survived a walk and wild pitch to get out of the inning safely.

Holloway has had control problems, and no one, not even he, can figure it out. Wednesday's performance, though, is a step in the right direction, and Woodward said he will start Holloway on the upcoming trip to south Florida.

The second game belonged to Jim Riley, now 3-1, who went the distance for the third time. The junior righty shackled the Pioneers with 10 strikeouts, eight over the last four innings, and allowed just five hits.

Benda, the feisty shortstop, drove in three more runs, giving him seven for the day. That makes it 37 rbi's on the season for the senior, which leads the team.

The remarkable thing here is that Benda bats second in the line-up, a position not conducive to a whole lot of runs batted in. But Benda thinks it's easy.

"(Mark) Gilbert's always on base," Benda said of the man who hits in front of him. "I tell him, you get on, I'll take a pitch so you can steal second, and then I'll knock you in."

Simple enough, but it works.

