

FSU squeezes out a win over Pirates

By George Maselli

Democrat staff writer

For the second straight day Florida State and Armstrong State trudged to a high-school field to play some big-time college baseball. For the second straight day it was a tournament-caliber, fundamental game that any coach would hold dear.

The Seminoles, who broke open a tight game to win 7-0 Tuesday in their opener, barely held on to a tighter game Wednesday 1-0. The pitching and play afield was nearly flawless in the game moved to Florida High because of soggy conditions at Seminole Stadium.

FSU will be off today and Friday before hosting South Florida (No. 19 in Baseball America) on Saturday at 1.

"Nobody's walking out of here with his head hanging," said Armstrong State Coach Joe Roberts, whose team was impressive for any level, much less NAIA. "We didn't lose to 'Turkey Tech.'"

What did in the Pirates was old-fashioned pitching. And a little luck. Mike Loynd, Richie Lewis and Kevin Smith combined on the shutout. The difference in the game was that Armstrong State pitcher Rick Zakrajsek, who was better than tough with a two-hitter, made two mistakes and paid for them. Loynd got away with his.

With the Seminoles leading in the sixth, Loynd allowed a single, a walk and balked both runners up a base with one out. On an 0-1 pitch to Pirate cleanup hitter J.D. Scott, Loynd hung a fat curve. Scott hammered it over the left-field fence, breaking a branch off an innocent pine tree.

But it was 10 feet foul.

"I was a little upset. I've been working on a new curve ball, and it was working well," said Loynd, who got the victory. "But I hung that one. I was saying 'go foul, go foul.' I was lucky."

"Their bench was standing and popping off at me, saying 'let's get on this hot dog.' I wanted to strike that guy out to shut them up and sit them down."

He sent Scott back empty with one of many snapping sliders he

threw. Sliders and curves were the pitches he usually relied on to strike out eight in six innings. Lewis, who admitted to nervousness, threw two innings and worked out of difficulty.

Smith, also anxious, had a more serious jam to deal with. He had to work out of a two-out, bases-loaded situation in the ninth. He was a little wild and was thrown into the terror-zone when shortstop Bien Figueroa made a two-out error to load the bases. That was the Seminoles' first fielding error in two games.

Smith came back to strike out Kevin Stafford on a nasty slider of his own to end the game. He has been projected as the bullpen stopper and earned save No. 1.

The Seminoles scored their only run by doing the basics in the third, the inning Zakrajsek made his two mistakes. Ahead with an 0-2 count, he blundered by giving freshman catcher Barry Blackwell something to hit. That just isn't done.

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Blackwell drove it to the wall in left-center for a double to lead off the inning. After failing to bunt him to third, Eric Mangham redeemed himself by flying deep enough to right to get Blackwell to third. Zakrajsek fired a wild pitch to allow Blackwell to score the precious run.

Besides the double, Zakrajsek walked only two and allowed just a sixth-inning bunt single to Jose Marzan.

"The only mistake he made was that high 0-2 fastball to Blackwell. He kept everything down," said FSU slugger Frank Fazzini, who like all of FSU's power hitters, was often tied up by Armstrong State off-speed stuff.

"Obviously, we did not swing the bats well, but their pitcher had something to do with that," said FSU Coach Mike Martin, whose offense has produced just 10 hits in two games, with only Blackwell's for extra bases. "We're going to put the bats in the whirlpool for a couple of days to warm them up."

It was a tough way to lose for the Pirates, who were expected to be opening-series fodder for the Seminoles, ranked No. 5 by Baseball America.

"Obviously, we weren't expected to come in here and win," said Roberts. "But we're not happy. We did some things we can be proud of and represented ourselves well."

"You can't be happy to lose, but we know we came here and played well against a team that's about as good as you can get."

Armstrong State					Florida State				
	ab	r	h	bi		ab	r	h	bi
Bertagnoli,dh	4	0	1	0	Alicea,2b	2	0	0	0
Stafford,cf	4	0	1	0	Marzan,3b	3	0	1	0
Fortner,c	2	0	0	0	Sorrento,rf	2	0	0	0
Scott,lf	4	0	1	0	Fazzini,lf	3	0	0	0
Williams,2b	3	0	0	0	Calandra,dh	3	0	0	0
Brown,3b	4	0	1	0	Jones,1b	3	0	0	0
Broad,1b	2	0	0	0	Figueroa,ss	3	0	0	0
Lamb,ph	0	0	0	0	Fulton,c	0	0	0	0
Chrstophr,pr	0	0	0	0	Blackwell,c	3	1	1	0
Frick,ss	3	0	0	0	Mangham,cf	3	0	0	0
Culberson,cf	3	0	0	0	Totals	25	1	2	0
Totals	29	0	4	0					

Armstrong State 000 000 000 — 0 4 0
 Florida State 001 000 000 — 1 2 2

E—Blackwell, Figueroa. LOB—Armstrong St. 11, Florida St. 3. 2B—Blackwell, Stafford. SB—Broad. S—Stafford, Culberson.

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Armstrong State						
Zakraisek L(0-1)	8	2	1	1	2	7
Florida State						
Loynd W(1-0)	6	3	0	0	3	8
Lewis	2	1	0	0	1	2
Smith S(1)	1	0	0	0	2	2

WP—Zakraisek. T—2:19. A—615.