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Seminoles lose 3-2 to Miami

By George Maselli Democrat staff writer

The expected rain stayed away, a big break for the 3,947 fans who turned out to watch. What they saw was just your basic Florida State-Miami baseball classic.

The Hurricanes, proving worthy of their No. 2 national ranking, got a two-run homer by Chris Hart and big-time relief pitching by Rick Raether to beat the Seminoles 3-2 Friday night at Seminole Stadium. FSU is 39-16; Miami is 43-8. The teams continue

the three-game series tonight at 7.

Painfully for the Seminoles, it was their ninth onerun loss of the season. It also hurt to waste superb pitching by Doug Little (10 strikeouts in 7% innings) and a solid relief effort by Richie Lewis.

While on his way to do a post-game radio interview, FSU Coach Mike Martin - who was booed when he relieved Little in the eighth inning - confronted a fan in the stands. After a heated discussion, Martin continued up to the press box.

But the stories this night were Mr. Hart and Mr.

Raether.

Hart, the senior first baseman who was the MVP of the NCAA South Regional here last May when he hit four homers in five games, has been down and out most of this season. He came to town with a .221 batting average and one homer in 48 games. He rode on of Little's few mistake pitches - "He got toward the middle of the plate," Hart said - over the rightcenter field fence to give Miami a 3-2 lead. Hart, a right-handed hitter with most of his power to right, was pitched inside when Little fanned him in the fourth inning.

Raether cleaned up, earning his 14th save of the season. He also lowered his 1.35 ERA with three innings of bad-to-the-bone relief. He worked out of nasty jams in the seventh and eighth, and survived a two-

out double by Luis Alicea in the ninth.

The Seminoles ran themselves out of the three of the first four innings with some glaring baserunning errors. In the bottom of the first, after Miami grabbed a 1-0 lead on an RBI double by Jon Leake, Bien Figueroa banged one that rolled to the wall in center with one out. Trying to stretch it into a triple, he was out by 10 feet on a perfect Miami relay. That mistake proved costly because Frank Fazzini, swinging a magical bat lately, followed with a solo homer to right to tie the game.

In the second, singles by Vince Calandra and Barry Blackwell and a sacrifice bunt by Keith Kidd left runners at second and third with one out. Eric Mangham singled for one run, but tried to sneak into

second on the throw to the plate. He was nailed at second.

In the fourth, Calandra singled with one out but was picked off

The game stayed at 2-1 until the seventh. Little was masterful, mixing a sweeping curve, slider and fastball. But he was crushed on two quick seventh-inning pitches, not an unusual happening at Seminole Stadium.

Rick Richardi singled to left, and Chris Hart, a senior struggling along with a .220 average, cranked the next pitch over the friendly fence in right-center to make it 3-2. Stung, Little came back to strike out the next three Hurricanes, but it was too late.

Miami starter Dan Davies, a lefty curve-baller, cruised into the seventh. But when he walked Calandra and hit Blackwell with a pitch to start the inning, he was yanked. Enter the savior, Raether,

who was converted into a wheeling side-arming style by Miami pitching coach Red Berry. He promptly got ahead of Keith Kidd 1-2. FSU Coach Mike Martin then decided to pinch-hit with lefty Paul Sorrento. One pitch later, Sorrento was struck out. Raether then fanned Mangham and got Alicea to bounce

out to end the inning.

The Seminoles got a huge chance to crack Raether in the eighth. Figueroa rapped a double to lead off the inning. Raether pitched around Fazzini and walked him. As Jimmy Jones struck out on a curve ball in the dirt, both runners advanced when it bounced away. Pinch-hitter Dru Kosco was walked intentionally to load the bases. But Raether got Calandra, among FSU's toughest clutch hitters, to fly to short right and retired pinch-hitter Ed Fulton to fly out to end the threat.

"These fans are something else," said Raether, who refused to crack the way many visiting pitchers have here. "They support their team and put a lot of pressure on us. It's a classic rivalry and they

have an outstanding ballclub. It was a fun game to be a part of.'

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