

FSU tops Bulls 9-8

By George Maselli
Democrat staff writer

TAMPA — Richie Lewis struck out 14 in 6½ innings, Paul Sorrento hit a two-run home run, and the Florida State Seminoles held on for a 9-8 victory over South Florida on Tuesday night.

FSU, ranked No. 1 in the Collegiate Baseball-ESPN poll and now 14-1, won its 12th straight. After beating South Florida for the third straight time, the Seminoles will play the Bulls again today at 3.

This was certainly no advertisement for the beauty of college baseball, and we're not talking about the three rain delays. There were 18 walks. FSU's first four runs were unearned, the result of three South Florida errors and two wild pitches.

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Lewis struck out two in the first inning, three in the second, one in the third, one in the fourth, two in the fifth, three in the sixth.

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When he was throwing strikes, Lewis was too much for South Florida. In the third with two on and two out (a walk and hit batman) he struck out Ward Hemond.

He finally got in too much trouble in the fifth. Two walks and a bouncing single loaded the bases with one out. An infield out brought home one run and Tony Taylor gave South Florida a brief 5-4 lead with a towering three-run

homer.

"I've been concerned because I haven't been throwing that hard and I tried to overcompensate too much tonight," Lewis said. "I tried to overdo it."

In the sixth inning, as teams that are winning find ways to do, the Seminoles took the game right back. Jose Marzan and Luis Alicea singled with one out, a wild pitch scored the run to tie the game at 5. Bien Figueroa singled in another run and scored when Paul Sorrento lined a vicious shot off the scoreboard in right for his third homer of the year.

"I guess we're just doing the things it takes to win," said Sorrento. "I hope that's a good omen for later in the season."

The 8-5 lead was not all that safe, particularly in this hitters' park. Lewis walked the first two batters in the sixth inning. But then he struck out the next two. He walked another to load the bases, but then struck out Scott Hemond (who along with Alicea had attracted a load of scouts to the park) to strand three more Bulls.

Lewis began the seventh with his 14th strikeout, but followed with his 10th walk. That was enough for FSU coach Mike Martin, who called reliever Steve Kovenisky from the bullpen.

W-Lewis, 4-0. L-Fagnano, 1-1.
HRs-Florida State, Sorrento; South Florida, Taylor, Ward Hemond.

Save — Lee, WP — Fagnano 3. PB — S. Hemond. A—1,344.