

Figueroa rips up Richmond

By George Maselli
Democrat staff writer

Completely ignored by major-league scouts in last June's draft, Florida State shortstop Bien Figueroa has become a man on a last-chance mission.

The senior from the Dominican Republic rapped out four more hits on a windy, misty Thursday night as FSU abused the Richmond Spiders 14-4 at Seminole Stadium. An intimate gathering of 712 watched the Seminoles tie a 29-year-old school record by stealing 11 bases, including a straight steal of home by noted sprinter Paul Sorrento. None of FSU's base thieves was apprehended.

FSU, 20-2, has two more shots at Richmond, 2-7, tonight and Saturday.

If you didn't know the sport, you could have sworn you were at the track. And they're off: Jose Marzan and Sorrento stole three bases each to win the daily double. Sorrento, who would rank in the average speed category, singled in the third, stole second, went to third on an infield out and easily stole home as C.P. Richardson laboriously delivered the ball to the plate.

Richmond catchers Steve Anderson and Chris Blanton were completely overmatched and only once came close to nailing a base-stealer. It got rough enough that Barry Blackwell, not a speedster to start with and further handicapped by a nagging groin pull, stole second base without a throw.

For the second straight game against these Spiders, an FSU pitcher worked on a no-hitter early. Ed Porcelli went into the sixth with a no-hitter Wednesday. This time Doug Little went into the fifth untouched, but was stung by a solo homer by Brian Jordan.

Little, 4-0, got the victory, but was knocked out when the Spiders scored three in the eighth inning to pull within 9-4. The good news for FSU fans was that Paul Thomas, who has been shelved with arm trouble, worked the last 1½ innings and looked sharp.

Seminole hitters basically made it a damp evening of batting practice. Catcher Ed Fulton hit a home run, a two-run single and drove in five runs total. Blackwell rapped out four hits including a triple and knocked in two runs. Jose Marzan and Sorrento each had two hits.

But the bat that continues to dazzle is Figueroa's. He doubled in a run in the first inning, and added

run-scoring singles in the third, sixth and eighth innings. In his last eight games is ripping along at a .583 pace to raise his average to .469.

"I know this is my last year, and I need to have a great year," said Figueroa, a native of Santo Domingo, D.R., who has played beside current Dodger shortstop phenom Mariano Duncan on the Dominican national team.

The draft snub was probably attributable to last year's arm troubles that limited his throwing strength, he said. This year he has had no such trouble. In fact, a throwing error from deep short Thursday night was his first error since moving back to short from second base the third game of the season, he said.

His glove work has been impressive, but it has been his bat that has been hardest to ignore. He hit .369 last year, however, but he currently stands .100 points ahead.

"Sometimes you have to have luck," Figueroa said. "I just want a chance."

RICHMOND					FLORIDA STATE				
	ab	r	h	bi		ab	r	h	bi
Paris,2b	5	1	1	1	Marzan,cf	6	2	2	0
Zanbo,ss	4	0	0	0	Alicea,2b	3	2	0	0
Sickinger,dh	4	1	2	1	Figueroa,ss	5	3	4	4
Malloy,1b	4	0	1	0	Fulton,c	5	2	2	5
Harding,lf	3	0	0	0	Sorrento,rf	4	2	2	0
Jordan,cf	4	1	2	1	Taddeo,rf	1	1	1	0
Blanton,rf-c	4	0	0	0	Mangham,cf	5	0	0	0
Krivak,3b	3	0	0	0	Saxner,dh	2	0	0	1
Anderson,c	0	0	0	0	Blackwell,3b	5	1	4	2
Reid,rf	3	1	1	0	Kidd,lf	0	0	0	0
Merritt,ph	1	0	0	0	Clayborne,lf	3	1	0	1
Rodgers,ph	1	0	0	0					
Totals	36	4	7	3	Totals	39	14	15	13

Richmond	000	010	030	—	4	7	4
Florida State	303	101	15x	—	14	15	3

E—Blackwell, Krivak 2, Blanto, Sorrento, Malloy, Figueroa. LOB—FSU 8, Richmond (NA). 2B—Taddeo, Figueroa, Sickinger 2, Sorrento. 3B—Blackwell, Paris. HR—Fulton (6), Jordan. SB—Marzan 3, Clayborne, Saxner, Sorrento 3, Alicea, Figueroa, Blackwell. SF—Clayborne, Saxner.

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Richmond						
Richardson L,1-2	5	7	7	6	2	7
Cressy	2	7	7	7	2	2
Gulermuth	1	1	0	0	1	0
Florida State						
Little W,4-0	7½	7	4	3	1	8
Thomas	1½	0	0	0	0	0

WP—Richardson, Cressy. T—2:41. A—712.