

FSU survives Gator surge to win 12-10

By George Maselli
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The happy crowd was taunting the Gators with the chant "Warm up the bus." The Seminoles were clubbing Florida and all was well in Tallahassee.

But in the home-run capital of the college-baseball world, no lead or pitcher is safe. Florida State, nearly blowing leads of 9-0 and 12-1, barely held off Florida 12-10 Thursday night with 3,117 watching at Seminole Stadium.

"It's a funny game. You can never relax in this ballpark," said FSU starting pitcher Doug Little, who raised his record to 8-1 and struck out 12 in his seven innings. "When I left the ballgame it was 11-5. Then I was back in the training room listening to the game on the radio and I was freaking out."

The 19th-ranked Seminoles, on a modest two-game winning streak, are 30-11. They host Georgia State for a doubleheader today starting at 5 p.m., then go to Memphis State for a big three-game series. Eighth-ranked Florida is 25-7.

The Gators had sent FSU reeling by beating the Seminoles twice in Gainesville on March 15 and 16. That made this single makeup game even more important than normal.

"It was real big. We wanted them bad," said Mike Loynd, normally a starter who came in to get the last three outs and earn a save.

"We went to Florida and we were highly ranked and they were down there where we are now. We wanted to cut them down and get us back up there (in the rankings). We've got to get a winning streak started."

Loynd saved the day. After six innings, Little and the Seminoles led 11-1. The Gators had gone into a wholesale collapse in the fifth inning when they kicked the ball around for three errors. Grateful FSU scored five unearned runs.

Eric Mangham had hit a two-run homer (his ninth) to key a four-run FSU third.

Florida scored once in the sixth, but when it threatened for more, Little bore down and escaped. In the seventh, it began getting scary for FSU. But with two outs and two on, Little struck out Brian Feinstein. The pitch escaped freshman catcher Barry Blackwell and bounded into the FSU dugout to load the bases on the passed ball. The next batter, Mike Stanley, hit a grand slam to make it 11-5.

The Gators scratched out two more runs in the eighth against reliever Richie Lewis to make it 11-7. The lead was becoming uncomfortable. The Seminoles struck back for an insurance run in the bottom of the inning with the help of Florida's fifth error.

But in the ninth against Ray Revak, the first two batters

reached. As the murmurs were growing in the stands — “Do you think they can blow a 10-run lead?” — Scott Ruskin hit the fourth homer of the night to right-center, over the short porch that makes Seminole Stadium famous, or infamous.

Martin then tried his luck with Loynd, who's been battling a virus and struggling some on the mound. The first batter doubled to the wall in center and there were still no outs. But Loynd struck out the next two — the 15th and 16th Gators to fan — and then allowed an infield single to prolong the suspense. He finally got Jose Alou to bounce out to end it.

“I thought we were going to be all right. Anybody would with a 10-run lead in the seventh inning,” said FSU Coach Mike Martin. “But it was a great night, a big crowd. It's the first time we've beaten Florida at anything — baseball, football, basketball — all year, isn't it?”

It is.

Florida					Florida State				
	ab	r	h	bi		ab	r	h	bi
Lusader,rf	5	2	3	0	Alicea,2b	5	3	2	2
Lombrdzz,ss	4	2	1	0	Figueroa,ss	5	3	3	1
Stanley,3b	5	2	3	4	Fazzini,lf	3	0	1	1
Ruskin,cf	5	1	2	4	Jones,1b	4	0	1	1
Clemo,3b	4	0	0	0	Calandra,dh	3	1	1	1
Hodges,1b	1	0	1	0	Kosco,dh	2	0	0	0
Martinez,lf	4	1	2	0	Marzan,3b	4	1	2	1
Touma,2b	5	0	0	0	Sorrento,rf	1	1	1	0
Hammond,1b	3	0	1	0	Kidd,rf	2	1	0	0
Arena,pr	0	1	0	0	Blackwell,c	3	0	0	0
Feinstein,c	0	1	0	0	Mangham,cf	3	2	1	2
Stant,ph	1	0	1	0	Totals	35	12	12	9
Wiehls,pr	0	0	0	0					
Alou,dh	5	0	1	2					
Totals	42	10	15	10					

Florida 000 001 423 — 10 15 5
Florida State 004 052 01x — 12 12 1

E—Clemo, Marzan, Lombardozi 2, Stanley, Ruskin. DP—Florida 1, FSU 1. LOB—Florida 8, FSU 5. 2B—Marzan, Martinez, Hodges. 3B—Martinez. HR—Mangham (9), Alicea (7), Stanley (5), Ruskin (4). SB—Alicea 2, Figueroa, Lusader, SF—Fazzini.

	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO
Florida						
Lee, L(6-1)	4	8	6	4	1	2
Brewer	1½	3	5	2	3	0
Durant	2¾	1	1	0	1	3
Florida State						
Little, W(8-1)	7	9	5	1	1	12
Lewis	¾	2	2	2	1	2
Revak	½	2	3	3	1	0
Loynd, S(1)	1	2	0	0	0	2

WP—Lewis, Durant. PB—Blackwell. BK—Lee. T—3:00. A—3,117.