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FSU shuts out Hurricanes

By David Lee Simmons

crat staff write

Florida State did to Miami what nobody had done in 131 previous tries, and got this classic rivalry off to a classic start.

The Seminoles mixed a little power with some manufactured runs and solid pitching to shut the Hurricanes down, 3-0 Friday night before 3,850 at Dick Howser Stadium.

FSU (31-9), ranked No. 12 in the Baseball America poll and No. 15 in the Collegiate Baseball-ESPN, won its ninth straight in the first of a three-game series that continues tonight at 7. Miami, ranked 11th in both polls, fell to 25-11.

It was FSU's 11th shutout of the season.

The lack of offense from both clubs wasn't surprising. But shutting out Miami is almost unheard of.

Gar Finnvold (7-0) and Ricky Kimball combined for a five-hitter backed by errorless FSU defense. Kimball inherited two baserunners in the ninth,

got one out and allowed a single before striking out Rey Noriega for his sixth save.

Finnvold, a transfer from Palm Beach Junior College, struck out six and walked three in 8% innings to drop his earned-run average from 2.25 to 1.99.

"I just had a good fastball, and I was able to spot it real well," said Finnvold. "I just tried not to let them get any good hacks."

It worked. Miami had only one extra-base hit, a harmless double by Chris Hirsch in the fifth. The Hurricanes stranded seven runners, six in scoring position.

In the tradition of this intense series, neither team gave much, relying on the things that have made the teams similar over the past few years: pitching and defense. Throughout most of the game, FSU held the edge in both departments.

Several defensive plays sparked FSU as well. Allen Bevis turned a double play in the second on a grounder off Finnvold's glove. Catcher Pedro Grifol, a Miami resident, forced Jose Trujillo into a rundown in the sixth for the third out. Grifol also went 3 for 3 with a sacrifice fly.

Finnvold helped himself out of a jam in the third. He covered first on a sacrifice bunt that put runners on second and third, then retired the next two batters.

FSU wasn't blazing any trails offensively. But then, neither of these teams has been known for its hitting the past couple of years.

"We were both just scratching for a run," FSU coach Mike Martin said. "We were bunting (Brad) Parker, and that tells you a lot right there."

But the Seminoles have been able to beat Miami starter Joe Grahe (6-4) in the past, including a 6-5 decision at Miami last year. This time, FSU mostly just chipped away.

Buddy Cribb did the initial damage with his solo shot over the right-field screen in the second, but Grahe gave up only one hit to the next 14 batters.

The 15th was the charm, with Marc Ronan slapping a double to right and moving to third on Grifol's single. Grahe came in and delivered a wild pitch that scored Ronan.

That gave FSU a 2-0 lead that looked hard to overcome, considering Finnvold. Ronan scored again in the eighth when he singled, stole second, moved to third on another Grahe wild pitch and scored on Grifol's flyout to center.

Grahe was yanked for Oscar Munoz after loading the bases on a walk, and Munoz got pinch-hitter Bob Reboin to flyout to first.

It was all FSU would need, despite a last-gasp Miami rally in the ninth. Finnvold walked the first two batters, bringing in Kimball, who forced pinch-hitter Mike Hind to fly out to short. After allowing a single to John Viera, Kimball

struck out Noriega for the win. Florida State will start lefthander Tim Nedin (5-3) tonight, while Miami will start freshman righthander Alex Fernandez (7-1).

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WP—Finnvold 7, Grahe 4. HBP—Parker (by Grahe). T—3:10. A—3,850.