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Contact: Harold Jameson

SAU Nips Missouri Valley In Home Debut

Magnolia, Ark. - After playing seven games on the road, Southern Arkansas University ushered in their first games at home this season with a doubleheader sweep of Missouri Valley College Saturday. The Muleriders nipped the Vikings in the first game, 5-4, in the bottom of the ninth, and in the seven-inning nightcap, scored the winning run in the bottom of the eighth for a 4-3 decision. Southern Arkansas is now 5-4 while Missouri Valley fell to 4-8.

In the opener, 'Rider pinch hitter Tyler Murray, in his first appearance of 2005, lined a shot into right center field for the winning run, scoring Armando Alvarez, who had opened the inning with a single.

Drew Garner pitched the first seven innings for SAU, giving up eight hits, four runs with three earned, walked two, and fanned three. Aaron Gisler worked the eighth and faced only three batters, allowing one hit. Michael Gamez came on to pitch the ninth and shut down the Vikings in order, whiffing one, to get the win and go to 1-0.

For MVC, Bruce Galloway pitched the first six innings, giving up four hits, three earned runs, walked four, and struck out six. Jake Pederson pitched the seventh and allowed one hit, one earned run, walked two, and fanned none. Scott Kelly pitched an inning and two-thirds, was tagged for three hits, one earned run, walked two, and fanned none. Kelly was the loser.

The 'Riders had eight hits, eight walks, two hit batters, a balk, two wild pitches, and two errors by MVC when on offense. The Vikings got nine hits, but only two walks, one wild pitch, and three errors by SAU when batting.

MVC took a 1-0 lead in the first inning and upped the margin to 3-0 with two runs in the third. SAU scored twice in the bottom of the third and tied the game with a run in the fourth. The Vikings went back ahead in the top of the seventh, 4-3, and SAU matched it in the eighth to bring on the final inning and Murray's game winning hit.

Daniel Moseley, Kolby Tucker, and Alvarez had doubles for the 'Riders, and Jake Wheeler had MVC's only two-bagger. Moseley was two for four, scored, and drove in a run and Alvarez was two for four and scored twice. Rondell Baptiste was the only Viking with more than one hit, going two for four.

In the second game, Jeremy Hambrice, a Magnolia sophomore, came on in relief in the sixth inning to get the win, and helped his own cause by driving in the winning run. Hambrice moved from first base to the mound and hurled two and two-thirds innings, allowing only one hit and one walk, while striking out two for the win to run his record to 1-0. Freshman Cody Jones opened for the 'Riders and pitched five and a third innings, giving up seven hits, three earned runs, walked none, and fanned two.

Jay Karlin started for MVC, giving up seven hits, three earned runs, walked two, and struck out five. Wes Aaron worked two-thirds of an inning, giving up no hits or runs, but walking three, and fanning none. Kelly pitched an inning and allowed three hits, one earned run, walked one, and whiffed one to take the loss, his second of the day..

Hambrice tripled and singled to go two for four, scored, was hit by a pitch, and drove in a run for the 'Riders. Ross Boudreaux, Tucker, and Murray had doubles.

Boudreaux was two for two, scored, walked twice, and drove in a run. Tucker was two for four and scored twice. Murray was two for three, drove in a run, and walked. Clayton Mofford walked twice.

MVC's Andrew Lafave had the only home run of the day in the first inning. He was two for four, walked, and drove in a run. Gabe Riley had a double and single as he went two for three and scored.

SAU had 10 hits, six walks, two hit batters, and a wild pitch offensively. MVC had eight hits and only one base on balls. Each side had an error. The Vikings took a 1-0 lead in the first inning on Lafave's homer before the 'Riders tied it in the second. SAU scored twice in the third for a 3-1 lead before the Vikings tied it with runs in the fourth and sixth.

In the bottom of the eighth, Eric Moya opened with a single for SAU followed by a single by Tucker. Murray was intentionally walked to load the bases. With two down, Hambrice delivered the game-winning hit to right field, scoring Tucker.

A single nine-inning game is scheduled Sunday, weather permitting, at noon.