

Austen Pitches USF Past Jacksonville

TAMPA, Florida (Feb. 16, 2003) -- David Austen struck out a career-high eight and helped South Florida sweep a two-game series from Jacksonville 6-1 Sunday afternoon at Red McEwen Field.

The senior right-hander allowed just two first-inning hits and walked only two while tossing 100 pitches over 7 2/3 innings in his second start of the year.

"It was a great game of baseball with eight strikeouts by Austen," said USF coach Eddie Cardieri. "It was a masterpiece, it was a gem. That was an artist at work, he was just out there doing his thing, doing it masterfully. That was beautiful."

Austen (1-0) retired 18 of 19 batters after a one-out single in the first through the beginning of the seventh inning. The only Dolphin to reach base over the stretch did so via an error in the fourth. Austen had three strikeouts in the seventh and was lifted after issuing a two-out walk in the eighth.

"I got ahead of the hitters and then I finished the hitters," said Austen who improved to 5-0 in seven career starts. "I was just throwing strikes. The two hits they did get, the first was on an 0-2 pitch and it was just a mistake and the second one was just a little bleeding groundball and after that I just threw strikes."

USF (3-1) gave Austen all he would need in the third inning when Myron Leslie drove home two runs with a double down the left-field line. Mike Cunningham had been hit by a pitch with one out and Bryan Hierlmeier reached on an infield error to set the table.

Ronnie Handley homered in the fourth to give USF a 3-0 lead and Hierlmeier delivered a two-run blast in the fifth as the Bulls built a 5-0 lead.

"They only had two hits off him and they got them both in the first inning. He was that good. He got three pitches over, fastball, curve, change but he got two over to the right-handers and two over to the leftys."

JU (1-3) scored a run in the eighth to spoil the shutout.

The Bulls are at Jacksonville Tuesday at 3:30 p.m.

Reference: University of Southern Florida web site:

<http://isis.fastmail.usf.edu/usf-athletics/Releases/Baseball/2003/02/16/20030216.htm>