

**FOR IMMEDIATE  
RELEASE**



Contact: Jason Guerette  
(201) 616 - 9117  
jason@southernillinoisminers.com

## **MINERS USE BIG INNING TO BEAT GRIZZLIES**

*Southern Illinois clinches winning season thanks to seven-run third inning*

**Sauget, IL (September 3, 2021)** – The Southern Illinois Miners bounced back in a big way on Friday night, scoring seven runs in the top of the third inning to erase an early deficit and hitting four home runs as a team to beat the Gateway Grizzlies 8-3, clinching the team's 13<sup>th</sup> winning season in their 14-year history by taking the series opener at GCS Credit Union Ballpark.

Gateway would take the initial lead in the game in the bottom of the second against **Jake Fisher** (5-8) when after a hit-by-pitch put a runner on base, Abdiel Diaz hit a two-run home run over the short wall in right field, giving the Grizzlies a 2-0 lead.

That lead would be short-lived, however, as the Miners would bat around in the next half inning and take the lead for good. **Cody Erickson** led off with a single, and **Jarrod Watkins** tied the score at 2-2 with a two-run home run to right field that eluded the glove of a leaping Jack Harris at the short wall. **Bryant Flete** then walked, went to second base on an errant pickoff throw by Gateway starter Jack Dicenso (1-1), then third on a fielder's choice off the bat of **Nolan Earley**. With two men on base, **Ariel Sandoval** followed by crushing a go-ahead, three-run home run far over the left field fence to make it 5-2 Miners.

Southern Illinois was not done. Still with no outs in the inning, **Jamey Smart** walked, and **Anthony Brocato** then cranked a two-run homer out to center field, making the score 7-2 Miners and capping the seven-run outburst. Fisher would take care of the rest, as the veteran left-hander pitched seven strong innings on the mound, allowing three runs on six hits while striking out three to earn his fifth win of the season and his third in a Miners uniform.

After a Justin Jones solo home run in the seventh made the score 7-3, Flete answered with a home run of his own in the top of the eighth for the final margin, finishing 2-for-4 with two runs scored and an RBI. Smart led the offense again with a 3-for-4 day that included a double and a run scored, while eight of the nine Miners starters had at least one hit in putting up 11 as a club to secure the series opener and their 49<sup>th</sup> win of the season.

The Miners will look to make it two in a row in the middle game of the weekend set in Sauget on Saturday, September 4, at 6:45 p.m., with **Stevie Ledesma** making the start for Southern Illinois against Gateway's Ryan Mordecai at GCS Credit Union Ballpark.

The Southern Illinois Miners are the Frontier League's most-successful franchise since debuting in 2007, winning the 2012 Frontier League Championship as well as division titles in 2010, 2014, 2015 and 2016. They have been awarded the Frontier League Organization of the Year award three times since their inception, and also set a new Frontier League attendance record in their inaugural season. In addition, they have sent 60 players to MLB organizations in their 14 years of operation. For ticket information, contact the box office at (618) 998-8499. For additional information, visit our website at [www.southernillinoisminers.com](http://www.southernillinoisminers.com).