

Clark Homers Twice, 'Dads top 'Hoppers 5-4

Written by Staff Reports
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Andrew Clark hit two home runs, helping power the Hickory Crawdads, 1st-Half Northern Division Champions, to the 5-4 win against the Greensboro Grasshoppers, before 2,112 fans at L.P. Frans Stadium on Thursday night.

The Crawdads (58-37, 18-9) got out to a powerful start. Odubel Herrera hooked a solo home run that was just fair inside the right-field foul pole for a 1-0 lead. One out later, Clark, the South Atlantic League Player of the Week, crushed a solo home run of his own staking the Crawdads to a 2-0 advantage.

Nick Tepesch retired the first seven batters he faced. But the Grasshoppers (53-44, 13-14) finally broke through with four runs in the top of the fifth. Daniel Black sparked the offense with a triple to start the inning. He quickly came home on an RBI single by Wilfredo Gimenez. With one out, Noah Perio advanced Gimenez to second with a single before both men scored on a three-run shot by Marcell Ozuna that gave Greensboro a 4-2 lead.

The Crawdads quickly erased the deficit in the bottom of the fifth. Tomas Telis got things started with a double. and Clark followed with his second home run of the game over the right field wall, tying the score at 4-4.

Hickory capitalized on a pair of Greensboro errors with losing pitcher Jordan Conley (1-2) on the mound in the bottom of the seventh. Telis drove the ball to left-center field to start the inning. He reached second on the play when left fielder Rand Smith misplayed the ball. Clark advanced Telis to third with a ground out, and then Christian Villanueva brought Telis home on an RBI fielder's choice to short. Black fired it home on the play, but Telis slid across safely as the throw also sailed wide of the plate, putting Hickory back on top, 5-4.

Jimmy Reyes (4-0), who picked up his fourth win of the year, worked three perfect innings in relief after taking over in the seventh. Tepesch, despite a shakey fifth inning, went six innings and finished with nine strikeouts. Reyes struck out four.

NOTES: Hickory wraps up the series against Greensboro on Friday with Friday Night Fireworks, presented by Hickory Dickory Dock. First Pitch is at 7 p.m., gates open at 6 pm.....Saturday is the annual Christian Concert Game, presented by Chick-Fil-A, 106.9 The Light and Young & Associates, against the Delmarva Shorebirds at 6 p.m. Don't miss the Dove Award winning band, Sidewalk Prophets, performing live after the game! All tickets are just \$12 and going fast! Gates open at 5 pm.