

## Road Trip Starts off Right, 'Dads Win

Written by Staff Reports  
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The Hickory Crawdads hit the road Thursday night hoping the road would help cure their early season woes, and at least for one night it did. The 'Dads struck for six early runs against the rival Kannapolis Intimidators and rode their pitching to a 6-1 win at CMC-NorthEast Stadium. A Crawdads offense that entered the night struggling to come through with clutch hits exploded for six runs over the first three innings to take a lead they would never relinquish. The bats would be backed up by a solid all-around pitching performance that included 9 combined strikeouts and just four hits allowed.

Leadoff hitter Lewis Brinson started the party with a double inside the third base line to leadoff the first and came in one out later on an RBI double by right fielder Nomar Mazara.

After the Intimidators tied the score with a leadoff solo homer from Micah Johnson in the bottom of the first, Hickory left fielder Jordan Akins gave his team the lead back with an RBI double off the left field wall. Akins would come in one batter later on an RBI groundout from shortstop Luis Marte to put the 'Dads up 3-1.

Hickory would finish the scoring and give themselves some breathing room in the third when second baseman Ryan Rua launched a two-out, two on pitch off the top of the center field wall. The hustling Rua never stopped running and, with the encouragement of Manager Corey Ragsdale coaching at third, ran all the way around the bases for a 3-run, inside the park home run.

The unconventional long ball was more than enough for starting pitcher Conner Sadzeck and the Hickory bullpen. Sadzeck put together arguably the best start of any Crawdad this year, as the right hander held Kannapolis to just one run on three hits and four strikeouts over his five innings pitched.

The much maligned 'Dads bullpen took over the sixth and didn't miss a beat, with Jose Valdespina and Ryne Slack combining to toss four shutout innings to close out the win.

Rua finished the game 1-4 with his second homer of the year and RBIs 5, 6, and 7. Brinson came away with this second 3-hit game of the year going 3-5 while Akins also had a multi-hit game going 2-4.

Sadzeck (1-0) picked up the first win by a Crawdads starting pitcher this season while Kannapolis starter Brandon Brennan (0-1) took the loss after allowing all six 'Dads runs, five earned, on eight hits during his six frames on the mound.

With the win the Crawdads (3-5) take a game from the first place Intimidators (5-3). The two clubs will meet up again Friday night at 7:05 for game two of their four-game series.

**NOTES:** The Crawdads will take on the Intimidators again Friday night at 7:05 for game two of their 4-game series....Individual Tickets for all Crawdads home games are available right now at [Hickorycrawdads.com](http://Hickorycrawdads.com) or by calling (828) 322-3000! Group outings, corporate partnerships, Buffalo Wild Wings Claw Club memberships and Ticket Books are also available right now by calling the Front Office at (828) 322-3000.