

## 'Dads Walk-Off with 5th Straight Win

Written by Staff Reports

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A winning streak that had seen some improbable comebacks received its greatest rally yet Saturday night, as the Hickory Crawdads overcame a 6-run, 7th inning deficit to the Charleston RiverDogs with a Lewis Brinson walk-off infield single resulting in an amazing 10-9 victory. The game-winning ricochet single was the cherry on top to what was a stunning comeback for the 'Dads, who had mustered just two runs and three hits through the first six frames. Hickory suddenly woke up in the seventh trailing 8-2, before catcher Jorge Alfaro laced a 2-out, 2-RBI single to right to score two runs. Joey Gallo would later come in on a wild pitch to cut the Crawdads deficit to 8-5.

Following a top of the eighth inning where 'Dads reliever Coby Cowgill escaped a sticky situation with runners on second and third with no out, Luis Marte continued the Hickory rally in the bottom of the frame when he reached on a strikeout wild pitch. Brinson followed with what should have been a ground out, but turned into an error against Charleston second baseman Claudio Custodio.

The next batter was DH Nick Williams, who wasted little time in crushing his second home run of the night over the left field wall to tie the game at 8-8. One batter later, Ryan Rua finished the comeback with a solo home run to left to give Hickory its first lead at 9-8. Both Williams and Rua had hit solo home runs in the first for the 'Dads only runs prior to the seventh.

In what had already been a wild game the 9th inning could hardly be easy, however. Sporting a newly minted one-run lead, 'Dads reliever Josh McElwee struck out the first batter of the inning before walking RiverDogs center fielder Danny Oh, hitting DH Taylor Dugas and walking shortstop Cito Culver to load the bases with just one out.

McElwee proceeded to get Charleston first baseman Greg Bird to fly out to right, but Crawdads right fielder Nomar Mazara dropped the ball allowing Oh to score the tying run. The fly out was officially ruled as a fielder's choice as Mazara recovered to throw out Culver at second, saving the 'Dads what would have been their fourth error of the game.

So with the game once more tied at 9-9, Jordan Akins led off the bottom of the 9th with a line-drive single to center, followed by a stolen base and a wild pitch to move him to third with two outs. One out away from heading to extra innings Brinson came through with his first hit of the game, a line drive that careened off Charleston hurler Charlie Short for a game-winning infield single.

The dramatic come-from-behind victory lasted a season long 3 hours and 44 minutes while also sporting a season high in Crawdads homers (4) and total runs scored (19). Williams finished the game 3-5 with two home runs, four RBI and three runs scored, while Rua also went deep twice finishing 2-5 with 2 HRs and 2 RBI. The two-player, double-homer night marks the third straight game in which a Crawdads batter has hit multiple home runs.

Alfaro (2-4, 2 RBI) and Akins (2-5, R) joined Williams and Rua with multi-hit games. McElwee (2-0) picked up the win for the Crawdads despite blowing the save in the ninth, while Short (0-1) earned the loss for Charleston.

The Crawdads have now won a season high five straight games to move to 9-7 on the year, while Charleston drops to 8-7 with the loss. The 'Dads and RiverDogs will conclude their four-game series with a double header on Sunday. First pitch for game one is scheduled for 2:00 pm.

NOTES: The 'Dads wrap up their 4-game series and home stand against the Charleston RiverDogs with a Sunday doubleheader starting at 2:00.....Individual Tickets for all Crawdads

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