

## Smith Leads 'Dads To Victory

Written by Staff Reports  
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One night after seeing their 7-game win streak come to an end, the Hickory Crawdads rode their pitching and three solo home runs en route to a solid 5-2 win over the Greensboro Grasshoppers at NewBridge Bank Park.

Making his first start of the season due to Eric Brooks' injury, 'Dads hurler Tyler Smith looked solid on the mound in holding Greensboro to two runs on three hits over 4.2 innings pitched. The right-hander needed just 47 pitches to breeze through the first four innings, allowing one run on a pair of hits. The 19th round pick in the 2012 draft ran out of steam in the fifth however, walking two and allowing another run before being relieved by John Kukuruda.

Kukuruda's outing actually started off a little rough with Greensboro third baseman Yordy Cabrera singling to left. The base hit looked like it would plate another Grasshopper run, but 'Dads left fielder Nick Williams gunned out Yeison Hernandez at the plate to preserve the Hickory lead.

Kukuruda would go on to throw 2.1 shutout frames, allowing just the one hit and no walks while striking out four. Reliever Cody Kendall entered the game in the 8th and allowed just one hit himself while shutting out Greensboro on three strikeouts.

At the plate, the 'Dads were propelled by three solo home runs, one each from Nomar Mazara, Joe Maloney and Lewis Brinson. Mazara's solo shot gave the 'Dads a 1-0 lead in the second and actually cleared the big scoreboard and clock in right field. Maloney and Brinson each hit their homers in the seventh, advancing Hickory's lead from 3-2 to 5-2.

Mazara ended the night going 2-3 with a HR, 2B, and RBI while Maloney went 1-3 with his HR, a walk and two runs scored. Brinson's HR was his only hit as he finished 1-5.

Kukuruda (2-0) earned the win for the 'Dads while Kendall picked up his team leading third save of the season. Greensboro starting pitcher Austin Brice (1-2) took the loss despite allowing just three runs on three hits over his five innings on the mound.

With the victory the Crawdads (12-8) have split the first two games of their 3-game series against the Grasshoppers (11-9) and take over sole possession of first place in the SAL North Division for the first time this year. The 'Dads and Grasshoppers will play the rubber match of their matchup Thursday night at 7:00 pm.

**NOTES:** The Crawdads 7-game road trip continues with a final game in Greensboro Thursday followed by four contests in Hagerstown. You can follow the 'Dads through the entire trip on 1490 AM or online at [hickorycrawdads.com](http://hickorycrawdads.com)....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.