

Three Homers, Vasquez, Backbone 'Dads In 6-3 Win

Written by Staff Reports
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L. P. Frans stadium was privy to a great pitching performance Thursday night, but it may not have been from the pitcher many expected. Facing defending SAL Pitcher of the Week Eddie Butler, it was Hickory hurler Kelvin Vasquez who controlled the game with five shutout innings in the

Crawdads 6-3 win over the Asheville Tourists.

In true Crawdads fashion Vasquez was backed by three solo home runs in the game, one each from Joey Gallo, Nomar Mazara and Lewis Brinson. Gallo's first inning shot gave the 'Dads an early 1-0 lead, while Mazara's line drive pushed the advantage to 2-0 through two innings. Hickory would put together a crooked number off of Butler in the third thanks in part to consecutive errors by Asheville first baseman Derek Jones and second baseman Juan Ciriaco. The three run frame was capped by an RBI single from Jorge Alfaro to push the 'Dads lead to 5-0.

That would be all Vasquez (2-1) would need, as the 20-year-old Dominican Republic native worked around early trouble to hold the Tourists scoreless on three hits, three walks and a season-high seven strikeouts to earn the win. Combined with his last outing on April 25th at Greensboro, Vasquez is now 2-0 in his last two starts with only two runs allowed over 10.2 innings.

Butler (2-1), meanwhile, was saddled with his first loss of the season after allowing five runs, three earned, on five hits, three walks and eight Ks in his 5.2 innings on the hill.

The Tourists would pick away at the 'Dads bullpen with single runs in the sixth, seventh and eighth frames, but Brinson's solo shot in the bottom of the 7th would provide some insurance in the Crawdads 6-3 victory. Hickory reliever Alexander Claudio put a stop to the Asheville rally with two perfect innings of relief to earn his second save of the season.

Mazara would lead the Crawdads offense with his home run and season-high three walks. Brinson and Gallo each finished 1-3 with a home run and a walk. The three combined long balls push Hickory's season total to a Minor League leading 42 dingers through just 26 games. The win stops a mini three-game slide for the 'Dads while also halting the Tourists 10-game win streak. The Crawdads (15-11) and Tourists (16-10) still sit in first place in their respective divisions and will face off in the rubber match of their 3-game series Friday night at 7:00 pm.

NOTES: The Crawdads are back home for the next week at L.P. Frans with a full slate of promotions scheduled! Friday night includes BARK AT THE PARK & MOST-IMPROVED STUDENT, Saturday features a great giveaway with 1,000 FREE Replica Jerseys going out courtesy of Pepsi and is NORTH CAROLINA EDUCATION LOTTERY NIGHT! Don't forget to participate in the 5K Home Run Trot Saturday morning at 8 am! Check out the 'Dads promo schedule here for all the details..... Individual Tickets for all Crawdads home games are available right now at 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.

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Photo Courtesy: Kelvin Vasquez, Hickory Crawdads