

'Dads Beat Kannapolis Again, 3-2

Written by Staff Reports
Tuesday, 03 May 2011 07:20

For the third time in the last seven games, Christian Villanueva has delivered a game-winning hit. This time it was a walk-off, solo home run in the bottom of the ninth as the Hickory Crawdads defeated the Kannapolis Intimidators 3-2, before 656 fans at L.P. Frans Stadium.

The first-place Crawdads continue to lead the South Atlantic League with 18 wins. After Crawdads starter Matt Thompson and Kannapolis starter Paul Burnside exchanged three scoreless frames to start the game, the Crawdads (18-7) took advantage of a big error in the bottom of the fourth to take the lead. Andrew Clark and Josh Richmond drew consecutive walks, before advancing on a wild pitch. One out later, both runners scored on a fielding miscue by 3B Juan Silverio, who failed to stop a Jhonny Gomez ground ball, giving the Crawdads a 2-0 lead.

The Intimidators picked up a run in the top of the sixth thanks to a Hickory error. Kannapolis (14-10) had runners at first and second, when Thompson threw a wild pitch that advanced both runners. As Mike Blanke was sliding into third on the play, Hickory catcher Tomas Telis misfired the ball past third and into left field, enabling Blanke to pop up and come home, cutting the 'Dads lead to 2-1.

After Randol Rojas took over and dealt a scoreless seventh, the Intimidators tied it up against him in the eighth. Brady Shoemaker led off with a single and moved to second on a sacrifice bunt. After a strikeout dealt by Rojas, Silverio atoned for his early error with a game-tying RBI single, making it 2-2.

Rojas got back on track and kept the tie intact through a 1-2-3 top of the ninth, setting the stage for Villanueva's late-game heroics in the bottom of the ninth. Losing pitcher Steven Upchurch retired Richmond to start the frame, but then Villanueva crushed the ball over the left field wall for the game-winning home run, lifting the Crawdads to a 3-2 win, and their third walk-off win (all on Villanueva hits) during this homestand.

NOTES: The 'Dads go for the sweep of the Intimidators in the final game of the homestand on Tuesday night at 7 p.m. (gates open at 6 p.m.). It is Dollar Day at the ballpark, with 10 items just a buck each. All fans can buy one ticket and get a second grandstand ticket for just a buck! Tuesday will also be Dale Earnhardt Chevy Night - all fans that wear a Dale Earnhardt shirt will get a Buy One, Get One ticket to the game! Also, all fans that drive a Chevy to the game will get FREE parking! Tuesday's game also features KRAFT Singles Tuesday Night Tickets - bring a KRAFT Singles wrapper to the Ticket Office for a Buy One, Get One ticket offer from KRAFT!