

'Dads rally in 9th, but fall short, 5-4

Written by Staff Reports
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The Hickory Crawdads scored two runs in the top of the ninth to pull within one run of tying the game, but the Rome Braves held on for the 5-4 win, before 2,419 fans at State Mutual Stadium in Rome on Sunday afternoon.

The Braves took advantage of two errors in the top of the first and scored an unearned run for a 1-0 lead.

But the Crawdads came right back in the top of the second. Andrew Clark led off with a double and Josh Richardson drew a walk. One out later, Alejandro Selen loaded the bases on an infield single before Kellin Deglan walked driving in a run, making it a 2-1 game.

After Buckel retired the final seven batters he faced, RHP Ben Rowen took over on the mound and retired the first three he faced in the fourth inning. The Braves added an insurance run in the fifth as Bobby Raugh scored on Matt Lipka's sacrifice fly, making it 3-1. A solo home run by Alejandro Selen in the top of the seventh made it 3-2.

But Roman responded by scoring twice in the bottom of the seventh for a 5-2 Chris Garcia got things started as he reached on a leadoff single and moved to third on back-to-back bunts. An RBI single by Lipka and a run-scoring triple by RF David Rohm highlighted the frame.

The Crawdads rallied and scored twice in the ninth, with the potential tying run at third base before the Braves hung on for the win. Clark and Richmond sparked the near comeback with consecutive singles to start the ninth. Christian Villanueva delivered an RBI double to right, scoring Clark; Richmond went to third. One out later, Deglan bounced an RBI grounder to second, scoring Richmond and moving Villanueva, the possible tying run, to third with two outs. Pinch hitter Jurickson Profar walked before Kyle Mertins, who nailed down his third save of the year, retired Teodoro Martinez on a ground-ball out.

NOTES: The Crawdads wrap up the road series against the Rome Braves on Monday at 7 p.m. The 'Dads return to L.P. Frans to kick off a four-game home series against the Charleston River Dogs on Wed., May 25 at 7 p.m.! It will be Bald is Beautiful Night, with all bald fans getting a Half Off ticket! Also, as part of Guaranteed WINSdays, if the 'Dads don't win, all fans in attendance will get a FREE ticket to a future game. Wednesday will also be Unemployment Night - bring an NCESC-issued debit card or printed online statement to the Ticket Office for four FREE tickets to the game! Gates open at 6 p.m.