

## Crawdads Drop 4th Straight

Written by Staff Reports  
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It was a different night and a different location, but the same unfortunate script for the Hickory Crawdads Monday night. In their first game back at L.P. Frans Stadium after a 1-3 road trip the 'Dads

were their own worst enemy, as they tied a season high with five errors and left 11 men on base resulting in a 9-5 loss to the West Virginia Power.

The loss was a season worst 4th in a row for the normally slugging Crawdads, a stretch that has seen their offense dry up and their pitching become prone to bad innings. In fact for the third straight game the 'Dads actually entered the 3rd inning either tied or with an early lead, only to watch their starting pitcher struggle to escape the frame.

Monday it was Hickory leadoff hitter Lewis Brinson who started the game off with a bang, lining a solo home run to right to give the Crawdads an early 1-0 lead. Brinson's 8th homer of the year looked like it would be just the tip of the iceberg for the 'Dads in the inning, as teammates Nick Vickerson (single), Jorge Alfaro (hit-by-pitch) and Ryan Rua (single) all reached behind him to load the bases with nobody out. Power starting pitcher Jake Burnette would buckle down after that though, as the righty got a line out from Joey Gallo before striking out both Nomar Mazara and Jordan Akins to escape the inning with just the one run surrendered.

After the 'Dads committed two of their five errors and surrendered the first of five unearned runs in the top of the second to tie the game at 1-1, the club would once again load the bases in the bottom of the sixth. With two outs Rua was able to win his battle with Burnette and coax an RBI walk to put Hickory back on top 2-1. Once again the 'Dads would leave the bases loaded though, as Gallo flew out to left to leave three more men on base.

Things would go downhill from there, as the Power would take advantage of a two more Hickory errors and a suddenly ineffective Kelvin Vasquez to plate six runs, three earned, and take an 8-2 lead they would never relinquish.

West Virginia would add another unearned run in the fourth off the fifth Hickory error to go ahead 8-2.

The 'Dads would finally get back on the scoreboard in the bottom of the seventh thanks to an error by the Power, as catcher Jorge Alfaro walked to start the frame and eventually came in on a miscue by third baseman D.J. Crumlich to make the score 8-3.

West Virginia would score a final run in the top of the ninth before Nomar Mazara doubled home two in the bottom of the inning to end the scoring at 9-5.

Mazara led the Crawdads offense going 3-5 with a double and 2 RBI while Alfaro reached base four times thanks to two walks and two hit-by-pitches.

Vasquez (2-2) took the loss for the 'Dads after lasting only 2.1 innings and allowing seven runs, three earned, on six hits. Power reliever Josh Smith (1-1) earned the win after giving up just one unearned run on one hit in 3.1 innings of relief.

The Crawdads fall to (19-17) with the loss, just a game ahead of the Power (19-18) for second place in the North Division. The 'Dads will look to snap their losing streak in game two of the series Tuesday night at 6:00 pm.

**NOTES:** The Crawdads are still home for two more games against the West Virginia Power. Tuesday night is a Dollar Night where fans can buy one ticket at regular price and receive a

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second ticket of equal value for just \$1. Hotdogs, popcorn, Pepsi products and other concession items are also just a buck! Finally, Wednesday is a day game and another Business Persons Special with \$5 box seats available to anyone who presents a business card at the ticket office! It's also Unemployment Night where fans can show their NCEC issued debit card and receive up to four complimentary tickets.....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.