

Shorebirds Rally Past Crawdads

Written by Staff Reports
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For the majority of Friday night's game against the Delmarva Shorebirds the Hickory Crawdads held on to a precariously slim 2-1 lead, relying on solid pitching and defense to get them through. Unfortunately one rough inning did away with that plan, as the Shorebirds plated four runs in the seventh resulting in a 5-2 'Dads loss at Arthur W. Purdue Stadium. Crawdads second baseman Ryan Rua gave the 'Dads an early 2-0 lead when he belted his 10th home run of the year well past the left field wall in the first. The 2-out, two-run shot was the 63rd team homer for the 'Dads this year.

The Shorebirds would score their first run in the bottom of the second, plating an unearned run thanks to a fielding error by Rua to make the score 2-1. That's when both starting pitchers would settle in.

Tyler Smith of the Crawdads and Branden Kline of the Shorebirds proceeded to put up zeros through the next four innings, keeping the score 2-1. Smith left the game after five innings pitched, allowing only the unearned run on four hits, two walks and three strikeouts. Kline, meanwhile, struck out a career-high 13 batters over his 5.2 innings, holding the Crawdads to only the two first inning runs on four hits.

Hickory was the first team to go to the bullpen, calling on lefty Joe Burns in the sixth. The southpaw looked great in his first inning, retiring the Shorebirds in order with two strikeouts. Everything change in the seventh however, as Delmarva jumped on Burns for four runs, three earned, on three hits to take their first lead of the game at 5-2.

Burns hurt his cause by committing two errors in the inning, while also giving up a bases-loaded, 3-RBI triple to Lucas Herbst to break open the game.

The Crawdads would threaten one last time in the top of the ninth by bringing the tying run to the plate with two outs, but catcher Jorge Alfaro struck out for the third time to end the game at 5-2.

The 'Dads tied a season high with 18 team strikeouts, including five from Lewis Brinson and four by Nick Urbanus. Only Rua (2-3, HR, 2 RBI, BB) and Mazara (2-3, 2B, BB) avoided the K. Burns (1-1) took the loss for Hickory after allowing four runs, three earned, on three hits, a walk and four strikeouts in his two innings pitched. Shorebirds reliever Jose Nivara (1-2) earned his first win of the year for his 2.1 scoreless innings of work, giving up one hit while walking three and fanning two. Matt Price (6) picked up the save for his scoreless ninth.

The Crawdads (21-19) will try to bounce back and pick up their first win of the series against the Shorebirds (19-20) Saturday night at 7:05 pm.

NOTES: The Crawdads continue their road trip with 2 more games in Salisbury, MD against the Delmarva ShoreBirds. The 'Dads will return home for a week long home stand starting Monday May 20th.....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.