

Clutch Hitting Carries Hickory To Victory

Written by Staff Reports

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The Hickory Crawdads put on a two-out hitting clinic Tuesday night, as the 'Dads came through with six, 2-out runs in route to their 7-4 win over the Augusta GreenJackets at Lake Olmstead Stadium. One night after being held to a season-low two hits in a 4-0 shutout loss, a revamped Crawdads lineup came through with seven runs on nine hits despite three regulars sitting the bench. Jorge Alfaro, Ryan Rua and Nomar Mazara all began the game not in the starting lineup, a lineup that also saw slugger Joey Gallo drop to 7th and center fielder Lewis Brinson to 6th.

The shakeup worked however, as the trio's replacements all came through with RBI hits in the win. Catcher David Lyon led the way going 1-3 with a double, 2 RBI and walk, while second baseman Nick Vikerson finished 1-3 with an RBI single and two walks. Right fielder Jordan Akins 1-3 with an RBI single, before being hit by a pitch on the left arm and exiting the game in the ninth inning.

The Crawdads fell behind early in the game when Augusta plated three unearned runs in the third courtesy of two hits and a costly error by third baseman Nick Urbanus. The 'Dads would commit three errors on the night, with all four Augusta runs ending up unearned.

The 'Dads cut into the 3-0 deficit in the top of the fourth, when Akins singled up the middle to drive in Nick Williams and make the score 3-1. Hickory would temporarily tie up the contest at 3-3 the next inning, when shortstop Luis Marte picked up a 2-out RBI double then came in to score on a 2-out RBI single from Urbanus.

After the GreenJackets retook the lead in the bottom of the fifth, the 'Dads would once again use two-out hits to take their first lead in the seventh. Urbanus came through again with an RBI double to left to tie the score, then came in one batter later when Vickerson singled to right to give the Crawdads a 5-4 lead.

Hickory wrapped up the scoring in the eighth, as Lyon came through with his 2-out, 2-RBI double to give the 'Dads their 7-4 lead.

The late scoring made a winner out of Hickory reliever Jose Leclerc (1-2) who tossed three shutout innings on one hit, one walk and four strikeouts. Alexander Claudio (8) followed with two shutout innings of his own to record the six-out save. Augusta starter Kendry Flores (3-3) took the loss after pitching 6.2 innings and giving up five runs on seven hits, two walks and 6 Ks.

The win is the eighth in the last 10 games for Hickory (29-21), who moves to within one game of first place Hagerstown in the North Division. The loss drops Augusta to 23-13. The 'Dads will go for the series win on Wednesday, with first pitch scheduled for 7:05 pm.

NOTES: The Crawdads will continue their 7-game road trip with one more game in Augusta before starting a 4-game set in Rome on Thursday. The 'Dads will return home on Tuesday, June 4th for a 3-game series against the Lakewood Blue Claws.....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.

Photo Courtesy: Rua, Gallo, and Maloney, Hickory Crawdads