

Hickory Dominates In Second Half Opener

Written by Staff Reports
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The Hickory Crawdads kicked off the second half of their South Atlantic League schedule in fine fashion Thursday night, as the 'Dads shutout the Greensboro Grasshoppers 7-0 in front of 2,622 fans at L.P.

Frans Stadium.

Starting pitcher Luis Parra led the way, tossing seven shutout innings to keep the Grasshoppers at bay. The Crawdads offense also chimed in with 11 hits, including two homers, in the win. Early on the Hickory bats were held in check however, as the two clubs played to a 0-0 tie through the first 4 innings. The 'Dads broke open the goose egg game in the fifth, when left fielder Nicker Williams lined a solo home run over the left field wall to put Hickory ahead 1-0. The long ball was Williams' 13th of the year.

The lead doubled to 2-0 in the sixth thanks to back-to-back doubles by Jordan Akins and Lewis Brinson. The Crawdads then picked up another single run with two outs in the 7th to go ahead 3-0. Nomar Mazara singled to right on a hit-and-run with Jorge Alfaro. Mazara took a big turn around first and ended up in a rundown, but the nimble outfielder was able to avoid the tag out long enough for Alfaro to score all the way from first.

Hickory finally pulled away in the 8th, plating four more runs to take their 7-0 lead. Second baseman Ryan Rua started the rally with a one-out double to left and came in two batters later on an RBI single by Akins. The big blast of the frame came from the next hitter though, as Brinson launched a 3-run bomb to left to put the 'Dads up by seven. The long ball was Brinson's 14th of the season and the 108th of the year for the Crawdads.

That was more than enough cushion for reliever Keone Kela, who followed Parra with two shutout innings complete with three strikeouts to earn his first save of the year. Parra (3-1) got the win for his seven-shutout frames, allowing just four hits, three walks and four Ks.

Greensboro starting pitcher Scott Lyman (2-4) took the loss after giving up three runs on eight hits, one walk, and a career-high 13 strikeouts in 7 innings on the mound.

Brinson finished the game 2-4 with a home run, a double and four RBI, while Williams went 1-4 with a homer. Akins and Alfaro also had good nights, with both batters going 2-4 with a double. The win moves the 'Dads to 1-0 to start the second half while the Grasshoppers fall to 0-1. The two clubs will match up again Friday night at 7:00 pm for game two of their four-game series.

NOTES: The Crawdads are home for the next week against both the Grasshoppers and Lexington Legends. Friday night is the Summer Kickoff Event, Grandfather Mountain Night and another Fireworks Friday! Saturday features the Chipper Jones Bobblehead Giveaway to the first 1,000 fans with paid admission courtesy of Galaxy Foot, Nissin and Kicks 103.3. Sunday, meanwhile, is Dale Earnhardt Chevrolet Night with FREE parking to all Chevys and a FREE ticket for every set of Chevy keys shown at the ticket office.....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

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Books are also available right now by calling the Front Office at (828) 322-3000.

Photo Courtesy: Lewis Brinson, Hickory Crawdads