

Rua, Gallo, Lyon All Homer, Hickory Wins

Written by Staff Reports
Monday, 24 June 2013 06:37

It may not have been easy for the Hickory Crawdads Sunday evening, but at the end of the night the 'Dads hit just enough home runs and survived a ninth inning scare to prevail over the Greensboro Grasshoppers 4-3 and take the series three game to one.

A Crawdads offense already on a historic home run pace added three more long balls to the total in the win, with third baseman Joey Gallo kicking things off with a solo blast to left-center in the first to give Hickory a 1-0 lead. The homer was the 23rd of the year for Gallo, temporarily tying him with teammate Ryan Rua for the Minor League Baseball lead.

In the second inning the 'Dads picked up another homer from an unlikely source, as backup catcher David Lyon launched a 2-run dinger to right to push the Crawdads advantage to 3-0. The homer was only the second of the year for Lyon.

The early advantage seemed to be more than enough for Hickory starting pitcher Andrew Faulkner, who cruised through the first four innings while facing the minimum number of batters. The Grasshoppers finally got to Faulkner in the fifth, with DH Viosergy Rosa lofting a solo homer to left and first baseman Mat Juengel singling and eventually scoring on a wild pitch to make the score 3-2.

Greensboro completed the comeback in the seventh, when third baseman Yordy Cabrera lined a solo blast to left to tie the game at 3-3. The homer was the 11th of the year for Cabrera and his second in as many nights against Hickory.

While the 'Hoppers lineup surged the 'Dads had quieted down after the early action. The Crawdads entered the eighth having not scored since the third and without a hit since the fourth, but Rua changed all that with one swing as he crushed a solo dinger to left to put the 'Dads back up 4-3. The big fly was the 24th of the year for the Hickory second baseman, once again placing him atop the MiLB leaderboard.

With a one-run lead the ninth inning got off to a rocky start for the Crawdads and reliever Ryan Bores, as the Grasshoppers picked up two hits and took advantage of a pair of Hickory errors to load the bases with nobody out. Faced with the pressure-packed situation Bores rose to the occasion, as the righty struck out catcher Mike Vaughn before inducing a game-ending 4-3 double play.

Reliever Keone Kela (2-2) picked up the win for the Crawdads for his 1.1 scoreless innings of relief, while Bores earned his first save of the season after escaping the ninth. Greensboro reliever Blake Logan (1-6) took the loss for allowing Rua's game-winning blast.

Rua finished the night 1-3 with a solo homer and walk while Gallo went 1-2 with a solo home run and two walks. Lyon also joined in on the long ball and walk combo, going 1-1 with a 2-run blast and two free passes.

The victory gives the Crawdads the series win over Greensboro and pushes their second half record to 3-1, while the Grasshoppers fall to 1-3. The 'Dads will now host the Lexington Legends for the first and only time this year. The 3-game series kicks off Monday night at 7:00 pm.

NOTES: With three more home runs tonight, the Crawdads season total now sits at 115. The single-season Crawdad record is 135 home runs while the SAL record stands at 173.....The Crawdads will now host the Lexington Legends for a 3-game series to wrap up the home stand. Monday marks the first game against Lexington and is also Senior 2-for-1 Night, BINGO Night and WSVM Night. Tuesday is Metric Madness and another Dollar Day where fans can buy one regularly priced ticket and get a second of equal or lesser value for just \$1! A plethora of

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concession items are also just a buck! Finally on Wednesday, the 'Dads will wrap up the home stand with a special 12:00 pm game for Summer Camp Day and Unemployment Day.....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: David Lyon, Hickory Crawdads