

Mazara Goes Deep, Hickory Downs Asheville

Written by Staff Reports
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A matchup featuring the two most powerful lineups in the South Atlantic League turned into a pitcher's duel Thursday night, with a 7th inning solo homer by Nomar Mazara leading the Hickory Crawdads to a 2-1 win over the Asheville Tourists at Crawdads Stadium. The Crawdads and Tourists both entered the game ranked in the top 5 in the SAL in runs scored and homers, but each team was held to just a single run through the first six innings. Asheville struck first with a solo homer by Derek Jones in the top of the 3rd, followed the next half inning by an RBI triple from Hickory center fielder Chris Garia to tie the game at 1-1. Fast forward to the bottom of the 7th, and Tourists starting pitcher Matt Flemer had retired the last 12 Crawdads in a row before Mazara lined the first pitch of his at-bat over the right field fence for a solo blast and a 2-1 Crawdads lead. The long ball was the 9th homer of the year for Mazara and the 141st of the season for the Crawdads, who continue to add to their new single-season home run record.

The Hickory bullpen would hold Asheville in check the rest of the way, with LHP Sam Stafford pitching the 8th and RHP Jose Leclerc the 9th. Stafford (3-4) earned the win for his efforts with two scoreless innings pitched. Leclerc (3) picked up the save after striking out Tourists cleanup hitter Tom Murphy with the tying run on third in the ninth. Flemer (2-3) was handed the loss for allowing two runs on four hits, no walks and 7 Ks over his seven innings pitched.

Crawdads starting pitcher Andrew Faulkner received a no-decision, after allowing only one run on six hits, one walk and four strikeouts over 6 IP. Mazara finished the game 2-3 with the home run, a double and an RBI. Garia went 1-3 with a triple and an RBI while Luis Marte had a 1-3 night with a run scored.

The win snaps the 'Dads 6-game, home losing streak and improves the Crawdads (22-18) record against the Tourists (16-23) this season to 6-1. The two clubs will face off again Friday night at 7:00 pm for game two of their 4-game series from Crawdads Stadium.

NOTES: Saturday's game and Christian concert featuring Big Daddy Weave has been SOLD OUT! Looking forward to a packed house as the 'Dads battle the Tourists.....Thanks to Mazara's game-winning dinger, the Crawdads season home run total now sits at 141, just 32 away from the South Atlantic League record of 173 home runs in a season.....The Crawdads will stay at home for another six days, with three more games against Asheville and a 3-game series with Greensboro. Friday is another Fireworks Friday and a North Carolina Education Lottery Night while Sunday is Splash Day at Crawdads Stadium! The fun continues on Monday with Video Game Night, while Tuesday showcases Dollar Night and Wednesday wraps up the home stand with Kids Run the Show Night! Check out the entire Crawdads promotional schedule here.....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: Nomar Mazara, Hickory Crawdads