

Brinson Blasts Walk-Off In Wild 10-9 Win

Written by Staff Reports

Tuesday, 06 August 2013 23:14

The Hickory Crawdads welcomed All-Star center fielder Lewis Brinson back from the disabled list Tuesday night and watched as he gave the 'Dads their second straight walk-off win with a 2-run blast in the 9th for a 10-9 victory over the Greensboro Grasshoppers at Crawdads Stadium. Brinson, who had missed the last nine games while on the DL with a head contusion, hit the ground running his first game back with a 3-4 night complete with two home runs, three RBI, four runs scored, a walk and a stolen base.

The Crawdads entered the 9th trailing the Grasshoppers 9-7. Catcher Jorge Alfaro started the rally with a hit-by-pitch with one out, followed by a wild pitch to move him to second and a single to right by Ryan Rua to put runners at the corners. Nomar Mazara drove in the first run of the inning with an RBI sacrifice fly to deep center to make the score 9-8 and bring up Brinson with one on and two outs.

Brinson battled to a full count before crushing the game-winning 2-run blast to left to give the 'Dads their second straight walk-off win and their 11th such win of the season.

Prior to the late rally, Hickory and Greensboro had battled back and forth over the first eight frames. The Grasshoppers jumped out to an early lead with two runs in the second and another in the third to take a 3-0 lead on 'Dads starting pitcher Andrew Faulkner.

The Crawdads responded with a 4-run third, with Rua driving in his South Atlantic League leading 82nd RBI of the year on a bases loaded walk before Mazara cleared the bases on a 3-RBI double to left to give the 'Dads a 4-3 lead.

The Hickory lead expanded to 5-3 when Brinson singled, stole a base and scored on a wild pitch in the 4th.

Continuing the seesaw affair, Greensboro rallied for three runs in the 5th to chase Faulkner from the game and take a 6-5 lead. The 'Dads once again responded in the 6th however, with Brinson sending a moon shot solo homer to left to tie the game at 6-6.

The tie would be broken up the following half inning, when the Grasshoppers once again put up a 3-spot on Hickory reliever Tyler Smith to re-take the lead 9-6. The Crawdads picked up a run in the bottom of the 8th on a Brinson walk and an RBI groundout by Jordan Akins to cut the score to 9-7, and set up the dramatic 9th inning rally.

Hickory reliever Jose Valdespina (4-1) earned the win after throwing a scoreless top of the 9th, while Greensboro reliever Jheyson Manzueta (3-4) took the loss after allowing the three 9th inning runs.

Mazara joined Brinson with a good night, going 1-4 with a double and four RBI. Alfaro finished the game 1-3 with a double, a hit-by-pitch, a walk and two runs scored, while Kevin Torres went 3-4 and Akins finished 2-4 with a double and an RBI.

The walk-off win is the 11th of the year for the Crawdads, and pushes their second half record to 26-19. The Grasshoppers fall to 19-25 with the loss. The 'Dads will go for the series sweep over the Grasshoppers Wednesday night, with first pitch scheduled for 7:00 pm.

NOTES: Brinson's two homer night pushed the Crawdads season home run total to 149, just 24 away from the South Atlantic League record of 173 home runs in a season....The Crawdads will wrap up their home stand Wednesday 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.

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Photo Courtesy: Lewis Brinson, Hickory Crawdads