

## Sand Gnats Nip Crawdads, 2-0

Written by Staff Reports

Sunday, 11 August 2013 05:15

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The Hickory Crawdads received a stellar pitching performance from starting pitching Frank Lopez Saturday night, with the lefty taking a no-hitter into the 6th inning. The 'Dads bullpen and bats were unable to reciprocate their starter's dominance however, as the Crawdads dropped their pitcher's duel with the Savannah Sand Gnats 2-0 in front of 2,991 fans at Grayson Stadium.

Lopez was at his finest Saturday while making his 12th start of the season. The 19-year-old Venezuelan cruised through the first five innings, with only a hit batter and a pair of walks marring his clean slate. It wasn't until the 6th that Savannah was able to get a one-out hit against Lopez, ending his night after 5.1 scoreless innings with only one hit, two walks and seven strikeouts.

Matching Lopez nearly pitch for pitch was Sand Gnats starter Seth Lugo. Making just his second South Atlantic League start, the 23-year-old Louisiana native allowed only one hit while breezing through the first four innings. The 'Dads had their best chance against the right-hander in the 5th, when Nomar Mazara and Lewis Brinson led off the frame with back-to-back singles, but Lugo retired the next three batters to keep the game scoreless.

The tide turned in the 7th, when the Sand Gnats were finally able to break up the scoreless game against Hickory reliever Santo Perez. The right-hander allowed a one out double to Jeff Reynolds before walking the ninth place hitter Dimas Ponce one out later to bring up leadoff hitter Jorge Rivero with two on and two out. Rivero delivered with a soft single into shallow center field to plate Reynolds and give Savannah a 1-0 lead.

The Sand Gnats picked up an insurance run with another two-out tally in the 8th to give them the 2-0 lead they would go on to win by.

Lugo (1-0) earned the win for his 7-shutout innings, allowing four hits and no walks while striking out 11. Perez (0-2) took the loss after allowing two runs on four hits over his 2.2 innings of relief. Savannah reliever Paul Sewald (5) earned the save with two scoreless innings out of the pen. Mazara (2-4) led the Crawdads offense, which outhit the Sand Gnats 6-5. Chris Garia, Jorge Alfaro, Joey Gallo and Brinson each went 1-4 for the remaining Hickory hits.

The loss drops the 'Dads to 27-22 in the second half, while Savannah improves to 25-20 with the win. The Crawdads will go for the 4-game split in the series Sunday afternoon, with first pitch scheduled for 2:05 pm.

**NOTES:** The 2013 Crawdads Jersey Auction is up and running! Bid on the actual game worn road uniforms of your favorite players from the last 3 years, including Joey Gallo, Jurickson Profar, Ryan Rua, Nick Tepesch, Lewis Brinson, Justin Grimm and Jorge Alfaro! Check out the auction page [here](#)....The Crawdads season home run total sits at 149, just 24 away from the South Atlantic League record of 173 home runs in a season....The Crawdads wrap up their road trip with an afternoon affair against the Sand Gnats on Sunday before returning home for a 3-game series starting on Tuesday, August 13th. Tuesday is Dollar Day at Crawdads Stadium, with Wednesday featuring Unemployment Night and Thursday finishing the home stand with Thirsty Thursday and Battle of the Bags! Check out the entire Crawdads promotional schedule [here](#)....Individual Tickets for all Crawdads home games are available right now at [Hickorycrawdads.com](http://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: Frank Lopez, Hickory Crawdads**