



SALEM RIDGEYAKS

SINGLE-A AFFILIATE OF THE BOSTON RED SOX



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Starlyn Nunez Walks It Off as RidgeYaks Defeat Shorebirds, 7-4

SALEM, Va. – The Salem RidgeYaks (14-18) delivered their first walk-off victory of the season on Saturday night, stunning the Delmarva Shorebirds (13-19) with a three-run homer from Starlyn Nunez in the bottom of the ninth inning to claim a 7-4 win at Carilion Clinic Field.

With the game tied entering the bottom of the ninth, Salem put two aboard after D'Angelo Ortiz reached and Anderson Fermin reached on an error by second baseman Jose Perez put runners on for Nunez. On a 0-1 pitch from Delmarva reliever Dalton Neuschwander, Nunez launched a towering drive to right field for his fourth home run of the season, sending the RidgeYaks dugout pouring onto the field in celebration.

Salem jumped ahead early in the first inning behind the long ball. Luke Heyman crushed a two-run homer to left field, his fifth homer of the season, scoring Andrews Oyata and giving the RidgeYaks a 2-0 lead.

The RidgeYaks added another run in the fourth inning when D'Angelo Ortiz drove home Avinson Pinto with a groundout to extend the advantage to 3-0.

Delmarva chipped away in the middle innings. Joshua Liranzo lifted a sacrifice fly in the fifth to score Stiven Martinez before Jose Perez launched a solo homer in the sixth inning to trim the Salem lead to 3-2.

The Shorebirds tied the game in unusual fashion in the seventh inning when Stiven Martinez stole second base while Braylon Whitaker broke for home on a first-and-third double steal, evening the score at 3-3.

Salem answered immediately in the bottom half of the inning. Ortiz came around to score on a fielder's choice off the bat of Anderson Fermin after a throwing error by Neuschwander rolled all the way to the backstop, allowing Fermin to advance to second and putting the RidgeYaks back in front, 4-3.

Delmarva rallied once more in the ninth inning when DJ Layton lined an RBI single to right field to score Whitaker and knot the game at 4-4 before Nunez delivered the decisive blast in the bottom half.

Nunez finished 2-for-5 with three RBIs and the walk-off homer, while Heyman drove in two runs with his first-inning shot. Ortiz scored twice and added an RBI, while Oyata reached base twice and scored once.





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On the mound, Salem's pitchers combined to strike out 16 batters. Cole Tolbert made his first appearance in 610 days after returning from Tommy John surgery and struck out four over 1.2 scoreless innings. Jason Gilman fanned seven over 2.1 innings, while Williams Rodriguez and Harry Blum combined to close out the final five innings. Blum earned his first win of the season.

Salem's pitching staff also excelled in high-leverage situations. The RidgeYaks limited the Shorebirds to a 2-for-21 clip with runners in scoring position, while Delmarva stranded 10 men on base.

The victory marked Salem's first win since Tuesday morning and snapped a three-game losing streak.

The RidgeYaks and Shorebirds conclude their six-game series on Sunday afternoon at Carilion Clinic Field. First pitch is scheduled for 2:05 p.m. as right-hander Leighton Finley gets the start for Salem.

Game Notes:

- Starlyn Nunez's three-run walk-off home run marked the first Salem walk-off since August 10, 2025 when Nunez recorded a walk-off single against Kannapolis
- The walk-off home run marked the first walk-off home run for Salem since Tyler Miller, did it on May 22, 2022 vs Lynchburg
- Salem's three ninth inning runs marked the most scored in a ninth inning this season
- Harry Blum earns his first professional win after blowing his second save of the season
- Jason Gilman's scoreless streak comes to end after seven scoreless frames to start his pro ball career
- Cole Tolbert made his first appearance in 610 days after recovering from Tommy John surgery
- The Yaks pitching staff struck out 16 batters, the third most in a single game this season
- Salem pitchers have struck out 10 or more batters for the 15th time in the last 17 games
- Stanley Tucker failed to reach base for the first time this season snapping his on-base streak at 12 games
- Luke Heyman's first inning home run was his fifth of the season to tie Eddy Azocar for the team lead in home runs
- Heyman has now hit four home runs in his last nine games since April 28

