



# SALEM RIDGEYAKS

SINGLE-A AFFILIATE OF THE BOSTON RED SOX



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## RidgeYaks Stung by Five-Run Eighth in 9-3 Loss to Hickory

SALEM, Va. – The Salem RidgeYaks (21-28) battled back to erase an early deficit, but a five-run eighth inning by the Hickory Crawdads (28-19) proved to be the difference in a 9-3 loss on Friday night at Carilion Clinic Field.

The Crawdads opened the scoring in the fourth inning when a balk by RidgeYaks starter Jose Bello brought home Yolfran Castillo for a 1-0 Hickory advantage.

Salem answered immediately in the bottom half of the frame. Right fielder Skylar King continued his recent power surge, launching a solo home run to right field, his fifth of the season, to even the score at 1-1.

Hickory regained control in the fifth. Hector Osorio lifted a sacrifice fly to score Angel Arredondo before Luis Marquez stole home as part of a double steal to extend the lead to 3-1. Later in the inning, Castillo lined an RBI single to center field to bring home Paulino Santana, pushing the Crawdads' advantage to 4-1 before Salem cut him down trying to stretch the hit into a double.

The RidgeYaks responded with aggressive baserunning of their own in the bottom of the fifth. Stanley Tucker stole home during a double steal with Starlyn Nunez, trimming the deficit to 4-2. Moments later, Nunez scored on a passed ball to bring Salem within one run at 4-3.

That score held until the eighth inning when Hickory broke the game open. Deward Tovar and Marcos Torres each delivered sacrifice flies off Salem reliever Harry Blum, while Josh Springer added an RBI single. The Crawdads also benefited from a bases-loaded walk and a wild pitch as they plated five runs in the frame to build a 9-3 lead.

Salem finished with seven hits on the night. Ortiz paced the offense with a 2-for-4 performance, while Nunez, King, Musett, Pinto and Tucker each added a hit. King's solo homer accounted for the RidgeYaks' lone RBI.

On the mound, Jose Bello (0-2) took the loss despite allowing two runs over 4.1 innings. Adam Bates struck out four batters across 2.2 innings of relief. Harry Blum was charged with five runs in the decisive eighth inning before Griffin Kilander recorded two strikeouts in a scoreless ninth.

Hickory collected six hits but capitalized on nine walks and went 4-for-6 with runners in scoring position. Castillo led the Crawdads offensively with a 3-for-4 night, while Springer, Marquez and Osorio each drove in a run.





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The RidgeYaks will look to bounce back on Saturday night as they continue their series against the Crawdads at Carilion Clinic Field. Right-hander Leighton Finley is scheduled to start for Salem against A.J. Russell, the No. 3 prospect in the Texas Rangers organization. First pitch is scheduled for 6:35 p.m. on Bluey and Bingo Night at the ballpark.

## Game Notes:

- Skylar King's fourth-inning home run was his first long ball since May 1 at Wilson
- King has recorded a hit in 14 of his last 19 games and has reached base safely in 16 of his last 20 contests dating back to May 3
- Stanley Tucker stole three bases, setting a new career high
- Tucker's three stolen bases are tied for the most by a RidgeYak in a game this season, matching Ilan Fernandez's three stolen bases at Wilson on May 2
- Tucker's steal of home was Salem's second steal of home this season, joining Kleyver Salazar, who accomplished the feat on May 6 against Delmarva
- Andrews Opata reached base with a walk despite going 0-for-3, extending his on-base streak to 13 games dating back to May 13
- Jose Bello's four walks tied a career high, previously set on May 7 against Delmarva
- Harry Blum's three walks tied the most he has allowed in a game this season, matching his outing on May 23 at Hill City
- Salem's offensive woes continued as the RidgeYaks hit just .187 during the series, scoring 11 runs on 20 hits through the first four games
- Salem is guaranteed no better than a series split, marking the seventh consecutive series in which the RidgeYaks have not secured a series victory

