



SALEM RIDGEYAKS

SINGLE-A AFFILIATE OF THE BOSTON RED SOX



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RidgeYaks Close Inaugural Season With 10-7 Loss to Howlers

SALEM, Va. – The Salem RidgeYaks (56-75, 31-35) closed out their inaugural season Sunday afternoon, falling 10-7 to the Hill City Howlers (56-75, 25-40) at Carilion Clinic Field at Salem Memorial Ballpark.

After losing four of the first five games of the series, Hill City struck first in the opening inning when Reiner Herrera lined an RBI single to score Alejandro Garza. The Howlers added two more runs in the third inning, extending their lead to 3-0 off RidgeYaks starter Berny Ortiz.

Salem answered in the bottom of the third when Andrews Opata launched his 11th home run of the season to left field, putting the RidgeYaks on the board.

The Howlers responded with a four-run fourth inning. Tre Broussard hit a two-run homer, the first of his professional career, before RBI singles from Lucas Moore and Erick Dessens extended the Hill City advantage to 7-1.

Salem has fought back from large deficits throughout 2026, and the RidgeYaks started another comeback attempt in the bottom of the fourth. D'Angelo Ortiz ripped a two-run double to left field, scoring Kleyver Salazar and Colton Coates. Opata followed with a sacrifice fly to bring home Josue Brito, cutting the deficit to 7-4.

Hill City added a run in the fifth before Herrera delivered a two-run double in the seventh, pushing the Howlers' lead to 10-4.

Once again, the RidgeYaks battled back. Salem scored twice in the seventh on an RBI single from Salazar and an RBI double from Coates, cutting the deficit to 10-6. Coates then brought the RidgeYaks within three with an RBI single in the bottom of the ninth, but Hill City closer Aaron Savary recorded the final two outs to close out the season with a 10-7 victory.

Coates led Salem's 12-hit attack, going 3-for-5 with a double, two RBIs and a run scored. Salazar also collected three hits and an RBI, while Opata finished 1-for-3 with a home run, two RBIs and a run scored. Ortiz added a pair of RBIs.

Berny Ortiz (0-2) took the loss for Salem after allowing three earned runs over three innings. Parker Dillhoff (2-0) earned the victory for Hill City after throwing two scoreless innings.

Salem concludes the 2026 regular season with a 56-75 record, a half-game decline from its 56-74 mark last season. Ozzie Chavez concluded his second season at the helm with 11 players who





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spent the entire season on the roster, from Opening Day in April through the final out in September.

Sunday's game marked the conclusion of Salem's first season as the **Salem RidgeYaks**, bringing the inaugural chapter of the franchise's new era to a close.

Baseball will return to Carilion Clinic Field in 2027. After months of waiting, the RidgeYaks will host the Fayetteville Woodpeckers on April 2-4 for Opening Weekend of the new season.

Until the new season commences, that's a wrap on the 2026 Salem RidgeYaks story.

Game Notes

- Salem finished the 2026 season with a 56-75 record, a half-game decline from last season's 56-74 mark
- Ozzie Chavez concludes his second season as the skipper of Salem with a 112-149 (.429) record at the helm and a career managerial record of 232-218 (.516)
- Salem has now finished below .500 in four of the last five seasons
- Salem's seven runs brought its season total to 725, surpassing the modern-era (since 2005) franchise record for most runs scored in a single season. The previous record was set in 2022 with 720 runs
- The 725 runs ranked third among all Carolina League teams this season, while Salem's 2,225 total bases also ranked third in the league
- Despite the loss, Salem won four of the six games in the week-long series and captured the season series over Hill City for the first time since 2021
- Franklin Primera went 1-for-4 to finish the season on an 18-game on-base streak dating back to Aug. 14
- Primera capped his season by batting .368 with a 1.080 OPS over his final 27 games dating back to Aug. 1, leading the RidgeYaks in both categories during that span
- Primera also finished second in the league in hitting during the second half with a .329 average over 46 games
- Salem's 12 hits were the eighth-most in a single game this season and the most hits the RidgeYaks recorded in a loss
- Salem pitchers struck out nine batters to bring their final total to 1,276 strikeouts as a pitching staff. That mark led the Carolina League and ranked eighth among Single-A clubs
- Yander Bonaci hurled two innings of hitless and scoreless baseball. Bonaci finished the season by allowing just one hit and no runs over his final three outings, spanning four innings
- Kleyver Salazar went 3-for-5 with an RBI to bring his final total to a team-leading 69 RBIs, which ranked eighth in the Carolina League
- Salazar finished the final series of the year leading the Carolina League with a .643 (9-for-14) batting average in September, along with five RBIs and a 1.492 OPS
- Salazar led the Carolina League in hitting during the second half, finishing with a .355 average and 1.040 OPS over 48 games





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- Salazar's .293 batting average for the season ranked third in the league among qualified hitters, while his .882 OPS led the league
- Andrews Opata belted his 11th home run of the season, finishing the year with 56 RBIs and a team-leading 54 stolen bases
- Colton Coates set a new career high with three hits in the season finale
- In four games played during the series, Coates batted .400, going 6-for-15 with a 1.033 OPS
- Wills Maginnis finished the day 2-for-4 for just the second multihit game of his career. His first came Aug. 18 against Wilson
- Salem finished the season with a 34-30 record in home games at Carilion Clinic Field, marking the first season since 2022 that the RidgeYaks finished with a winning record at home
- Salem finished the season with 11 members of its Opening Day roster on the final roster of 2026: Harry Blum, Nicolas De La Cruz, Christian Foutch, Wuilliams Rodriguez, Ethan Walker, Kleyver Salazar, Starlyn Nunez, D'Angelo Ortiz, Avinson Pinto, Anderson Fermin and Andrews Opata
- In total, 63 different players suited up for the 2026 Salem RidgeYaks

