

Kernels bite Timber Rattlers, 5-3

Written by Morgan Hawk

Friday, 21 June 2013 22:23 - Last Updated Friday, 21 June 2013 22:24



GRAND CHUTE, Wis. - Dalton Hicks drove in two runs, Tyler Grimes hit a key home run and the Kernels got strong work from their bullpen in a 5-3 victory over the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers before 4,406 fans at Fox Cities Stadium Friday night.

Tim Atherton and Kaleb Merck pitched the final six innings in relief to secure the victory for Cedar Rapids (2-0).

Atherton (4-2) pitched four innings, allowing no runs on two hits, and retired the first 10 batters he faced. Merck went two innings for his first save, allowing no runs on three hits while striking out one.

Hicks, who leads the Midwest League with 65 RBIs, got the Kernels on the board in the first inning when he doubled home Travis Harrison.

Tyrone Taylor's solo home run for Wisconsin in the bottom of the first inning tied the game, 1-1.

The Kernels took a 3-1 lead in the second inning as three walks led to a pair of runs. A single and three straight walks plated a run, with Niko Goodrum getting the RBI with a bases-loaded walk. Harrison followed with a sacrifice fly to score Jeremias Pineda.

The Timber Rattlers quickly matched the Kernels in the bottom of the second inning. Chris McFarland's two-run triple to deep center tied the game, 3-3.

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Grimes homered in the third inning, putting Cedar Rapids up 4-3. The blast was the fifth homer for the Kernels catcher and hit off of the scoreboard in left-center.

The Kernels extended their lead to 5-3 in the fourth inning when Hicks singled home Byron Buxton, who had walked.

The Kernels drew nine walks. They had chances to add insurance runs, but were unable to execute as they went 1-for-13 with runners in scoring position and stranded 12 runners.

Josue Montanez started for the Kernels, allowing three runs on five hits over three innings. He struck out one and walked one.

Tyler Wagner (6-6) took the loss for Wisconsin, allowing five runs and four hits in four innings. Wagner walked six and struck out three.

The Kernels face the Timber Rattlers (0-2) again Saturday at 6:35 p.m. with Brett Lee (4-4, 4.45 ERA) on the mound for Cedar Rapids.

KERNELS (5): Buxton, cf, 3 1 1 0, Goodrum, ss, 4 0 0 1, Harrison, 3b, 1 1 0 1, Hicks, 1b, 5 0 2 2, Grimes, c, 4 1 1 1, Kepler, dh, 4 0 1 0, Williams, lf, 5 0 0 0, Licon, 2b, 4 1 1 0, Pineda, rf, 3 1 1 0. Totals 33 5 7 5.

WISCONSIN (3): Reed, rf, 4 0 0 0, Arcia, ss, 5 0 1 0, Taylor, cf, 3 1 2 1, Roache, lf, 4 0 0 0, Giacalone, 1b, 4 0 1 0, Garza, 3b, 4 0 1 0, Rodriguez, dh, 4 1 2 0, Roberts, c, 3 1 0 0, Williams, pr, 0 0 0 0, McFarland, 2b, 4 0 3 2. Totals 35 3 10 3.

Kernels 121 100 000 - 5 7 1
Wisconsin 120 000 000 - 3 10 0

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Montanez, Atherton (4), Merck (8) and Grimes. Wagner, Strong (5), Viramontes (7) and Roberts. W - Atherton (4-2). L - Wagner (6-6). Sv - Merck. 2B - Hicks (22), Kepler (1). 3B - McFarland (4). HR - Grimes (5), Taylor (5). SB - Buxton 2 (31). E - Pineda. T - 2:53. A - 4,406.