

HAWKINS SENDS SWAMPDOGS TO 6TH STRAIGHT WIN

By: Leo Blavin

WILMINGTON, Nc. -- The Fayetteville SwampDogs (19-10) followed a familiar script when facing the Wilmington Sharks (13-16), giving up early runs to the Fins before coming from behind at The Shark Tank to swim away with a 6-4 win.

Wilmington took a 2-0 lead in the first inning as starter Shane Bishop (North Greenville) labored through his first 3 outs before gaining confidence and control of the zone to strikeout 5 batters in 3 innings of work.

Justin Hawkins (Clemson) helped his starting pitcher by homering over the left-field fence for a team-best fourth time this season, cutting the deficit in half in the second inning with his solo shot.

The Sharks plated one more run in the third inning to regain a two-run advantage. However, the SwampDogs bats would light up Buck Hardee Field in the fifth inning, preserving Fayetteville's winning streak.

Brett Helmbrecht (Coppin State) started the fifth inning with a one-out base hit, extending the catcher's hitting streak to three games. Following a strikeout, the SwampDogs recent streak of two-out rally magic continued. All-Star Jay Robinson (New Orleans) singled, advancing Helmbrecht to second base. Matt Morrow (Wright State) walked loading the bases before the SwampDogs comeback effort turned into the lead.

Jayson Newman (Cal State Northridge) singled to left field, plating 2 runs and tying up the contest. A balk plated Morrow and moved Newman to third base setting up Hawkins, who provided some early fireworks for the "Findependence Day" crowd blasting his second home run to the deepest part of the yard putting the SwampDogs on top 6-3.

The Sharks threatened to spoil the Dogs 4-0 record at the Shark Tank by plating one run and loading the bases in the 9th before Jayson Newman took the mound from his right field position and struck out the final two batters preserving Fayetteville's perfect record in Wilmington.

Newman earned his first save of the year, while Michael Lozano (Cypress College) picked up his second win of the year, following 1 inning of work in the fourth to improve to (2-0). Daniel Johnson (Charleston Southern) dropped a decision for the second time this year but remains an impressive (4-2) for the Sharks.

The SwampDogs return to The Swamp on Monday for their Fireworks Spectacular game against the Edenton Steamers. For all your SwampDogs news and updates please visit GoSwampDogs.com and follow us on Twitter @GoSwampDogs. The SwampDogs season is

presented by Fayetteville Kia.

The Coastal Plain League is the nation's premier summer collegiate baseball league. Celebrating its 21st season in 2017, the CPL features 15 teams playing in Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. The CPL has had over 1,400 alumni drafted and 98 of those – including 2011 AL MVP and Cy Young winner Justin Verlander – make their Major League debut; while another notable alum – Russell Wilson – won Super Bowl XLVIII. For more information on the Coastal Plain League, please visit the league website at www.coastalplain.com and follow us via Twitter @CPLBaseball.