

Ghost Peppers Win Wild Ride Against the Blue Crabs in Extras



By Tommy Portela

Waldorf, MD - Gastonia hangs on to the most nerve wracking game we've seen all year for an 8-7 win in ten innings. The Peppers now leap the Blue Crabs for second in the South in the second half, and stay five behind Lexington who won their 11th straight game tonight.

Grant Lavigne got the scoring started with a solo homer in the top of the second. Ryan McCarthy responded in the home half with an RBI double to level the score. Both starters got into a groove, as Connor Grey and Ian Kahaloa both threw incredibly well.

McCarthy and Lavigne added more damage, as the only ones to really do anything against the starters. McCarthy homered in the fifth to put the Crabs ahead 2-1, but Lavigne answered with a two-run shot in the sixth to make it 3-2 Peppers.

Southern Maryland took the lead back against the bullpen in the seventh, scoring twice on a pair of singles from Alejandro De Aza and Taylor Darden. In the eighth, on Kahaloa's final batter of the night, Justin Wylie left the yard to tie things up at four.

With two outs and the go-ahead run at second in the bottom of the eighth, a ball snuck through Wylie's legs to put the Crabs ahead. Another unearned run was scored later in the inning to make it 6-4.

Then came the swing of the night. After a great plate appearance from Chris Proctor to draw a walk in the ninth, Jace Rinehart demolished a hanging slider from Endrys Briceno to tie the score again at 6-6. Briceno left the bases loaded, and Donovan Benoit retired the side in order in the home half to send the game into extras.

On the first pitch of the tenth, Lavigne put the lead in Gastonia's hands with an RBI double. Proctor brought in a massive insurance run to make it 8-6. Benoit returned to the mound and let up a leadoff single and a sacrifice fly to cut the lead to one. After a wild pitch and a deep flyout, the tying run was at third with two outs, before McCarthy grounded out to end the game.

In an absolute rollercoaster of a ballgame tonight, the Peppers pull out a much needed victory. Gastonia has gotten no help from the Rockers this week, as they have lost four in a row to the Legends. The Peppers look to keep pace tomorrow night at 6:35 from Waldorf.