

Watson Walk-off Winner! That's right – Gastonia walks off for third straight game to sweep Rockers

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Repetitive (adj.): Involving doing or saying the same thing several times, especially in a way that is boring.

Besides the back-end part of the definition, this word could be used to describe the Gastonia-High Point series this week – a set that consisted of three walk-off wins for the Club.

Thursday night's contest ended with Kevin Watson Jr. lining a ball to left-center field, scoring Josh Stowers to cap off a sweep of the High Point Rockers, putting Gastonia 20 games over .500 after another euphoric victory.

This time, it didn't go to extras. There was no need to strand a Rockers ghost runner or advance a man on second by laying down a sacrifice bunt.

But it ended the same way as the two prior evenings – with Gastonia players celebrating on the field like small children, jumping up and down, having a blast. After all, the Club's magic number is down to 10 after its 5-4 walk-off win over its arch rival.

The Rockers struck first in another grueling match between the top two teams in the South.

Mike Wright Jr. allowed three runs on three hits in the third, allowing RBI singles off the bat of Ryan Grotjohn and Evan Edwards.

Gastonia responded with a run in the bottom half of the frame, with Jake Gatewood extending his on-base streak to 15 games on a run-scoring double.

Marc Flores tied the game with a two-run homer down the line in right, barely staying fair to make it 3-3 in the fourth. Flores has now hit four home runs in seven games with Gastonia.

The Club took a 4-3 lead with a Justin Wylie RBI single, and then High Point immediately responded by loading the bases with nobody out in the top of the seventh.

This was the biggest chance of the night for the Rockers, as right-hander Nate Peden came on to try limiting the damage.

Peden struck out Ben Aklinski before getting Colin Moran to roll one over to second, scoring a run in the process. He then induced a ground out to end the threat, only allowing one inherited run.

For the third straight evening, the game was tied after seven.

High Point closer Jameson McGrane came on for the ninth. And he retired the first two batters he faced.

A 10th inning for the third consecutive night? Not quite.

Josh Stowers, who came into the game leading the team in average (.295) and RBIs (41), drilled a ball deep to right-center field. The ball made its way over the glove of a leaping Aklinski, hopping once on the turf before exiting the yard.

The ground-rule double set up Watson Jr. who made an executive decision not to have the game go 10 once again.

The lefty went to the opposite field, as he has several times this season, knocking in Stowers to give Gastonia the 5-4 win.

The Club improved to 35-15 after sweeping the Rockers, and the lead has grown to four games over its rival. With 13 games remaining in the first half, Gastonia's magic number to clinch a postseason berth is 10.

Gastonia will now travel to Charleston, West Virginia for a weekend series against the Dirty Birds. First pitch on Friday is at 6:35 p.m.