

Monsters Flip Script on Bird Dawgs to Even Series

Bullpen Saves the Day Allowing Comeback Victory for Mississippi

KINSTON, NC - May 23, 2025 — The Mississippi Mud Monsters used a two-run rally in the sixth and five spotless innings from their bullpen to edge the Down East Bird Dawgs, 4–3, Saturday afternoon at Historic Grainger Stadium before 1,310 fans.

Mississippi jumped in front in the first when Brayland Skinner walked, stole second and scored on Kyle Booker's single. Down East matched the run and then went back in front, 3–2, on Yassel Pino's RBI knock in the fourth, but the Monsters refused to stay quiet.

The turning point came in the sixth. Following a Booker walk and a Ti'Quan Forbes single, Roberto González drove in Booker on a ground out to tie the game at three. Then, Nick Hassan battled a two-strike pitch for the go-ahead RBI single, scoring Forbes.

Starter Brandon Mitchell (4 IP, 5 H, 3 R, 2 ER) kept the game within reach before the Monsters' relief corps slammed the door. Tyree Thompson (3-0) struck out four over two scoreless frames, Gage Bihm covered the seventh and eighth without a hit, and Sergio Sanchez recorded a tidy ninth for his fourth save. The trio combined for five shutout innings, one hit and eight strikeouts.

Thompson, who won the very first Mud Monster game, and later became the first Mud Monster to win two games, is now the first Mud Monster to win three games.

Sanchez's save allowed for a personal dose of revenge. After surrendering the game-winning grand slam to Emmanuel Tapia on Thursday night, Sanchez faced Tapia again Friday night leading off the ninth. This time Sanchez split the barrel of one Tapia bat down the middle on a foul ball, sending half of the barrel into right field. Then Sanchez struck Tapia out with a merciless splitter.

Skinner's 11 steals and Sanchez's 4 saves are each tops in the Frontier League. Thompson's third win ties him with Joliet's Gunnar Kines for the league's lead in victories. Mississippi is now 6-5. Down East is 4-7.

Game five of the six-game set is Saturday at 6 p.m. with Josh Paulina (1-0 1.50 ERA) set to start for Mississippi.

Join us at Trustmark Park for an action-packed homestand featuring Memorial Day Fireworks presented by Milwaukee Tool on Monday, May 26, with a patriotic jersey auction benefiting Fifth Squad. On Wednesday, May 28, it's "What's on the Stick?" Night with \$2 Mystery and \$3 You Pick Country Pleasin' Sausage on a Stick. Thirsty Thursday returns May 29 with \$2 16oz draft beers, followed by another explosive Fireworks Friday on May 30. Saturday, May 31 is the Monster Kid Jersey Drop presented by Mississippi Farm Bureau, with the first 1,000 kids receiving a free youth jersey tee. Wrap up the fun on Sunday, June 1, with Howl in the Park — our dog-friendly game where four-legged fans are welcome too! For tickets, visit mudmonstersbaseball.com.