



# Pham Begins Assignment

by Brian Stull

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<http://www.stlbaseballweekly.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/16-5-4-Matheny-on-Pham.mp3>

(Busch Stadium) After missing 26 games due to an oblique strain in his first at-bat of the season, Tommy Pham is back in action tonight—leading off and playing centerfield in Memphis (AAA).

After some particularly aggressive batting practice sessions the last couple of days, the St. Louis Cardinals outfielder is beginning his rehab assignment with the Redbirds.

“He’s running through walls,” said Mike Matheny of Pham’s batting practice habits of late. “We’re all out there playing dodgeball with him because he’ll run right through you. He’s been going BP at 100% and swinging the bat hard—everything looks really close.”

There is not a specific amount of games or at-bats that Pham needs to reach before he is activated.

“Even though we put on a plan, he has a feel that he’s looking for,” answered Matheny. “We saw that last year in Spring Training when he got hurt. It looked like he was real close and he said ‘I can find 5th gear, but there’s a 6th’. Most of us have like three. And so for him to find 6th gear took a little more time. That’s not something that I’m even remotely in tune with, so we’re going to have to wait and see how he finds that gear.”

“I think last year it worked out well where he waited and then went down there and got crazy hot, came up here, and we benefited from it,” continued Matheny. “I think it’ll be a balance of what the training staff sees, but more importantly Tommy’s probably gonna be the guy to let us know when he’s right.”

After being recalled in August of last season, Pham hit .303 in 39 games for the Cardinals with 4 HRs and 15 RBIs.

## **BADER AND MORALES HONORED**

—A pair of Springfield (AA) prospects have been recognized for their accomplishments on the field as the St. Louis Cardinals named Harrison Bader and Andrew Morales as their Minor League Player and Pitcher of the Month for April.

Bader hit .338 with 5 home runs and 13 runs driven in while playing 20 games in centerfield for Springfield. A 3rd round pick in last year’s draft out of Florida, Bader led all of the Cardinals minor leaguers in hits (27) and batting average.

The 23-year old Morales was a 2nd round pick of the 2014 draft and struck out 22 batters in 25 innings while compiling a 3-1 record in the Texas League. He is in the midst of a 13.0-inning scoreless streak after throwing shutouts in his last two outings.

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