



Wisdom In His Game

by Brian Stull

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(Jupiter, FL) It's taken some time, but things appear to be back on track for St. Louis Cardinals third base prospect Patrick Wisdom.

Entering the weekend, Wisdom's three home runs are tied with Jose Martinez for most on the Cardinals this spring.

"Man, he is on time," praised Mike Matheny after a recent game. "It's nice to see for him because I know he's had a couple of springs in here where he hasn't quite been as sharp as he wanted to be. This to me looks like the player—we've had him in camp quite a few years now. I remember early on when we saw him thinking, this kid's got a real shot.

"We haven't backed off that, but there's been injuries in the way. He's continued to have things that have just don't quite allow him to get to that next level."

Selected 52nd overall in 2012, Wisdom is the last of the three third baseman (Stephen Piscotty, Carson Kelly) that Cardinals selected in the early part of that draft. He hit a combined 21 home runs in 90 games over his first two seasons, but just five last year in 78 games at Memphis.

"I just feel like I've been kind of stagnant in my career," shared Wisdom. "Not really making any improvements in my offense, so I kind of made some changes and worked hard this off-season. Working hard here with Mabe and Billy, so just kind of putting everything together. My mentality is a lot different this year, so I feel more comfortable going out there."

Besides the home runs, Wisdom is batting .375 (6-16) with four runs driven in this spring.

“What he’s showing right there—that kind of short stroke, reminds me a lot of a Scott Rolen-style swing,” continued Matheny. “Maximizing his core and his lower half. And he’s playing real well defensively, whether we put him over at third or we put him at first. He’s having a great spring.”

“I just have a different mentality coming into this spring,” said Wisdom. “I feel a lot better than I did in the past, I learned from my experiences, and kind of put everything together just moving forward.”

“It’s a complex change in a sense, but it’s so minute that no one would really know. But internally, it’s kind of a complex difference for me personally. Just understanding the game and who you are as a player, it really goes a long way.”

And while that minute change is working as he prepares each day in the cage and then later at the plate, the confidence of his mental change has made the biggest difference.”

“Knowing that I can be here and that I can play,” stated Wisdom. “Not second-guessing my abilities, because with failure that comes. You start second-guessing yourself in any little thing you do. As human beings that’s what you do. Just being able to push all my failures aside and kind of go back to my roots, understanding who I am and what I’m capable of. Keeping my family close I think was a big deal and having them support me has gone such a long way. I’m so thankful for that. I think just going back to that simple support system has really benefited me. Just knowing that I can play, that’s what it comes down to.”

Back home this off-season with family, Patrick spent some time walking down memory lane. It paid off.

“I wouldn’t say there was an epiphany, but I think it’s just the countless experiences of failure and learning from them,” said Wisdom, who was able to relate quite a bit to John Maxwell, a recent guest speaker to the Cardinals about leadership.

“Experiences are one thing and you can have a million different experiences, but being able to evaluate that experience and learn from it is where the true learning comes from,” said Wisdom. “I was able to step back and kind of look at all my experiences throughout the years and understand where I went wrong and what I’ve been doing. Essentially, kind of correct that moving forward and knowing that when it comes to that fork in the road, where I need to be.”

“Sitting there with my mom and dad and my brother, talking about old times and bringing out old video or old photos—when you’re a kid playing Pony and Little League. Just having fun, it’s a kids game and we’re just men playing it. I think just getting back to that has really helped me. Just understanding that it’s a game and it’s supposed to be fun. You can’t worry about if you’re going to strike out and you can’t worry about if you’re going to make an error. It’s going to be part of the game and you have to accept it, keep on playing, and having fun.

“You watch the Carps, the Wongs, the Piscottys—anybody. Peralata, Yadi—they’re having fun out here. Who cares if they go 0-10, 0-20? They’re still having fun, they’ve got a smile. Even Dexter, he’s great. Always smiling, no matter the results. That’s kind of really been an eye-opener for me, as well, being around these guys.”

The age and experience is coming together, as the 25-year old concluded his assesement—no pun intended.

“Applying some wisdom to my game,” smiled Wisdom.

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