



# Sierra Leaves Imprint

by Brian Stull

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(Busch Stadium) As the doors opened this afternoon, Magnerius Sierra and Jhonny Peralta both had occupied lockers in the St. Louis Cardinals clubhouse. In fact, Sierra was listed as a member in one of the pregame hitting groups. But before those workouts began, the team announced Peralta was activated from the disabled list and the rookie outfielder had been optioned to Springfield (AA).

“He did an excellent job,” stated General Manager John Mozeliak. “He stepped in and brought a lot of energy and when you look at his game, you can see why we were so excited about it. But now he can go back down and sort of harness the things he needs to work on.”

Batting .367 (11-30) Sierra hit in all seven games he played in—tying Enos Slaughter (’38), Terry Pendleton (’84), and Bo Hart (’03) at one shy of Homer Smoot’s 1902 franchise record of eight games.

“I think everybody realized, there wasn’t a lot of negative,” said Matheny. “Some things to work on, had some film work with a couple of the coaches with some ideas in the stolen base category. I think that’s something, there’s a whole nother level of his game when it comes to using his speed on the bases. Just anxious to kind of give him an opportunity to go and learn. Everything we gave him while he was here, on the fly, he handled exceptionally well. Obviously, just things we thought we would have—rather it was the defense or what he did on the bases was as expected. The offense was even beyond. It was a great stay for him.”

Since the debut of Sierra on May 7th, the Cardinals have a record of 6-3. Coincidence or not, two of those three losses came in games Maggy did not play.

“These types of moves are always harder when you’re having some team success,” said Mozeliak. “You look at how we were scoring runs and he was very much a part of that. But sort of big picture on this one, you think about his own development and allowing him to continue to work on what he needs to do. And I also feel from a team standpoint, Jhonny was not feeling well. He’s since been able to reassess himself with different medication, he’s feeling better, and I think he can contribute. You think about where he was in Spring Training and how he was playing, we certainly thought he was going to be part of our club.”

Where and how often Peralta fits in the lineup will be worked out over the coming days. Sierra will join and outfield in Springfield that will now be composed of essentially three centerfielders—himself, Oscar Mercado, and Adolis Garcia.

“I think he’s just going to play outfield,” said Mozeliak. “His centerfield defense is not something I feel that needs to be worked on. I do think the point of his game is what he needs to do offensively, but as far as where we play him we have some flexibility.”

“I think it’s a huge encouragement to him for what’s ahead to look forward to,” added Matheny. “I think every kid in our organization needs to realize the team goes down to Palm Beach and brings up their outfielder who’s 21-22 years old. It doesn’t matter. Be prepared that you could be the guy if you continue do things the right way.”

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