



Central Problem for Cardinals

by Brian Stull

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With the St. Louis Cardinals being swept this weekend by the Chicago Cubs, you're already very aware that the team is now 6.0 games in back of first place with just 13 games remaining on the regular season schedule.

You've also probably heard various stats such as if the Cardinals would be in first place if they had just played .500 against Chicago this season. This was the fourth straight September the Cardinals failed to win the series at Wrigley. Or maybe the 11 wins by the Cubs over the Cardinals this season is the most since 2007.

All true.

But the issue extends beyond beating the Chicago Cubs as the St. Louis Cardinals have had difficulty winning against the National League Central this season.

Overall, they are 28-35 against divisional foes this season. By comparison, Chicago is 38-27.

The Cardinals have gone:

4-11 vs. Chicago

7-9 vs. Cincinnati

7-9 vs. Milwaukee

10-6 vs Pittsburgh

Meanwhile, Chicago has a winning record against every divisional opponent except Milwaukee:

10-6 vs. Cincinnati
7-8 vs. Milwaukee
10-9 vs. Pittsburgh
11-4 vs. St. Louis

The Cardinals have actually fared better than Chicago against the other teams in the NL playoff mix, compiling a record of 14-12 compared to 10-16.

St. Louis:

3-4 vs. Los Angeles Dodgers
4-3 vs. Arizona
4-2 vs. Colorado
3-3 vs. Washington

Chicago:

2-4 vs. Los Angeles Dodgers
3-3 vs. Arizona
2-5 vs. Colorado
3-4 vs. Washington

Without question, the Cardinals face an uphill battle to secure a playoff spot this season. And unless they reverse their trend against the NL Central it will not happen as they finish with three games at Cincinnati and then Pittsburgh before returning home to close out the season with four against Chicago and three against Milwaukee.

The Cubs meanwhile, will play a pair at Tampa and then four at Milwaukee before the series at Busch Stadium and then closing out with three at Wrigley Field against Cincinnati.

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