

Cardinals Make History With 15th Consecutive Win, Rallying With Three In Seventh, Three More In Ninth To Defeat Cubs 8-5, Breaks 86-Year-Old Record

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CHICAGO - The St. Louis Cardinals rallied from a 4-2 deficit to take the lead with three runs in the top of the seventh inning, then scored three more runs in the ninth to defeat the Chicago Cubs 8-5 on Saturday afternoon, breaking the club's record for the longest winning streak in the 129-year history of the franchise with its 15th consecutive triumph.

The win broke the record set in 1935, when the Gashouse Gang set the old mark, led by Hall-of-Fame pitcher Dizzy Dean and his brother Paul, along with Pepper Martin, Joe Medwick, Frankie Frisch and some of the most colorful players in the team's history. It's also the longest winning streak in September since 1920.

Harrison Bader got the Cardinals out in front with a solo home run, his 14th, in the second, but the Cubbies took the lead in the home half of the third, when Willson Contreras doubled home the tying run, then Ian Happ singled home the lead run to put Chicago ahead 2-1.

Tyler O'Neill hit his 22nd homer of the season in the top of the fourth to tie the game at 2-2, but the Cubs then took back the lead in the bottom of the inning on an RBI single by Contreras and a bases loaded walk to Happ to make it 4-2. The St. Louis defense kept them in the game with four double plays, including one that involved Bader during a rundown in the fifth.

The Cardinals rallied in the seventh to take the lead for good, starting with a Bader RBI single to make it 4-3, then retying the game when rookie Lars Nootbaar singled to score Yadier Molina. A sacrifice fly to center by Paul DeJong scored Bader to give St. Louis a 5-4 lead.

St. Louis broke it open in the ninth, starting with a double to Bader, then stealing third base and scoring on a passed ball on a dropped third strike to Nootbaar, DeJong then clinched the game with a two-run homer to center to make it 8-4. Happ hit a two out solo homer to center to make the final 8-5, giving the Cardinals their record-setting win.

Jon Lester went five innings on the mound to start, giving up four runs on eight hits, walking three and striking out six. Kwang Hyun Kim went an inning to get the win, while T.J. McFarland threw two scoreless innings and Luis Garcia pitched the ninth to preserve the Cardinals' historic win.

Much more importantly, the Cardinals cut their magic number to clinch the second wild card berth to three, and possibly lower, depending on other results on Saturday. They'll go for the sweep of the series and get closer to the playoff berth when Jake Woodford goes against Chicago's Keegan Thompson in the finale, with first pitch set for 1:20 p.m.

