

Pham-Tastic Performance

by Brian Stull

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(Jupiter, FL) Following his line drive to right field in the 7th inning of the St. Louis Cardinals 5-2 victory over the Houston Astros on Friday, it was announced in the press box that Tommy Pham had become the first Cardinal since March 25, 2013 to record four hits in a Spring Training game. The last player to do so was Oscar Taveras.

“Humbled by that’s some pretty good and cool company to be in,” said Pham, who had only learned of matching the stat of his late friend a few moments before.

“Three of the four came with two strikes, I was just fighting,” said Pham. “Found the right side hole, it’s luck. You need some luck in this game. You hit a ball hard and it can get caught, so I was lucky today.”

Just a few hours earlier during the pregame media session, the topic was raised if Pham has been overshadowed by Randal Grichuk and Stephen Piscotty.

“How he defends is no secret,” answered Mike Matheny. “He’s a very good defender. Overshadowed—I don’t know if that’s true or not.”

One of the biggest obstacles for Pham has been staying healthy. He played in only 127 games from 2011 thru 2013.

“He had a lot of injuries,” pointed out Matheny. “Every time we tried to bring him into camp too we had limited opportunities to see him. Obviously followed how he did last year, it was a strong season. But it’s still one of those, he’s gonna have to do it here for us.”

“That’s all on myself though too,” shouldered Pham. “In the past, I wasn’t healthy enough to allow others to see me perform. Myself to blame there. Now, it’s been a long time, I’m finally at 100%. Now I’m getting an opportunity.”

“We’re going to keep throwing him in there,” said Matheny. “He’s going to get plenty of at-bats, plenty of time to show what he can do in the outfield. The minor league staff and all the development guys really like how he plays defensively. Still working on his offensive approach.”

Pham hit .324 with 10 home runs and 44 runs batted in last season for Memphis (AAA) and also had 20 stolen bases.