



"It was a good day"--Matheny

by Brian Stull

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(Jupiter, FL) There was a lot to like from Thursday's 4-1 victory in the Grapefruit League opener for St. Louis Cardinals Manager Mike Matheny.

Starting pitcher Carlos Martinez pitched a strong first two innings—not yielding a hit and striking out three in just 29 pitches against the likely regular season lineup of the Miami Marlins.

"I saw a guy that looked like he was trying to win a job," stated Matheny. "They weren't holding anything back, that was their 'A' lineup for the most part. It was a good way to measure for sure."

Martinez had a lot of movement on his sinker to go with a hard fastball, curveball, slider, and change-up.

"There's not this plan of you have to throw five change-ups," said Matheny of the pitch selection and variety from Martinez. "Just pitch. Fortunately, with Yadi back there, there's a rhyme and reason to why he selected the pitches he selected."

Jason Heyward singled in his first at-bat as a Cardinal and soon scored after a ground rule double by Matt Holliday and a 2-run single into left field from Matt Adams. The first baseman also drew the attention of his manager in batting practice.

"That was one of the most impressive batting practices I've seen," said Matheny. "He put five miles worth of balls in play today. Yeah, it was impressive. He's in a good spot swing-wise."

Randy Choate was able to face a series of left-handed batters in a row—even prompting him to joke about being stretched out as a starter since he went two innings. "You and Rosenthal," quipped Matheny in response.

The game also allowed the Cardinals to work in several substitutions which included Dean Anna, Greg Garcia, Ty Kelly, and Scott Moore getting their first chance to show what they bring to the utility role.

“Anna starts off with a real nice walk right there and gets things going,” said Matheny. “Scottie (Moore) puts the ball in play real hard and lets the wind take care of it. Then we had some good situational hitting—Ortega just putting the ball in play, watching guys get the jump. Garcia doing the same thing in a situation taking what they’re giving him, a hustle double. Saw a nice defensive play by Anna, saw a nice defensive play by Kelly. It was a good day.”

Kelly’s was aggressive in his first at-bat, jumping on the second pitch he saw in the 5th inning.

“I was thinking about what I wanted my approach to be for that first at-bat, for all the stuff I’ve talked about in the off-season about my taking a lot of pitches and stuff, I wanted to just go out there and take advantage of a mistake if I could off the bat and then kind of work into seeing more pitches as spring goes on and getting deeper into at-bats and things like that.”

“He had a good day all the way around,” commented Matheny. “Even though that ball did get up in the wind and carry quite a bit, it came off the bat really nice. He found the barrel right out of the gate. Liked his approach at the plate.”

HOMERS FOR HEALTH RETURNS

—As he stepped to the podium in the kick-off press conference, Matt Holliday pointed out he’s getting used to recruiting for his [Homers for Health campaign](#), as both his former partners for the charity, David Freese and Allen Craig had been traded away.

This season, Holliday is being joined in a Matt-trifecta with Adams and Carpenter to lead the charge in raising funds for Cardinal Glennon Children’s Medical Center.

“The Cardinals fans have done a great job of giving,” thanked Holliday for the more than \$690,000 raised last season. “You see what that money does when you get a chance to go see these kids and the influence it has on their families. The experience it changes from what can be a horrific and just sort of a tragic experience in a hospital—a lot of these kids are having serious surgeries. You see some of the joy that get’s brought because of this money and some of the things that Cardinal Glennon is able to do, it brings a whole new perspective to your life and what you see is important.”

Trevor Rosenthal has stepped up to join Adam Wainwright in the K's for Kids aspect of the charity.

“A couple of months ago, to hear at a banquet a couple of the families just talk about some of their experience at Cardinal Glennon and what some of these things were able to do for their family, it really is tear-jerking,” added Holliday. “Just to hear some of their experience with this, it makes it all worth it.”

After a very successful debut last year, Game Show Night will return April 14th at Ballpark Village. Game show legend Chuck Woolery will be among the special guests to emcee a contest.