



What About Jaime?

by Brian Stull

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<http://www.stlbaseballweekly.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/1-17-15-Mozeliak-on-Jaime-Garcia.mp3>

Over the last couple months of the offseason, St. Louis Cardinals General Manager John Mozeliak provided a “to be determined” or wait until Spring Training-type of answer when asked about Jaime Garcia. And though qualified, his answer changed when asked at the Winter Warm-Up.

“Right now the feedback’s been extraordinarily positive—I don’t know what to make of that,” said Mozeliak candidly. “In other words, he’s having a very good offseason. I don’t want to put too much pressure on him or too much on the club on what that actually means because I have not personally seen him, but from a medical standpoint, from what we’re hearing about his workouts and so forth he’s really feeling good.”

Garcia had thoracic outlet surgery in July and shared during the postseason that his plan was to receive medical clearance the end of October to begin throwing and then “get after it” before he shut down for a normal offseason. While not clear how aggressive those 2014 sessions were, Mozeliak did confirm that Garcia has already begun throwing in preparation for 2015.

Garcia has a record of 42-26 in 97 starts for the Cardinals but due to various injuries has been unable to appear in at least 10 games each of the last two seasons for St. Louis.

“When he pitches, he’s really good,” furthered Mozeliak. “So it’s really just a matter of what will his medical status be when we see him. And more importantly, I think the way

to think about is, it's not necessarily being defined by what you see in maybe February—it may be what he looks like in April or May or June, but knowing he does exist and he is someone capable of possibly helping us. You think back to when he had that surgery versus what we're hearing today, there is a level of optimism.”

The Cardinals rotation currently shapes up with John Lackey, Lance Lynn, Michael Wacha, and Adam Wainwright expected to fill four of the spots and Carlos Martinez and Marco Gonzales in competition for the other. Provided he's healthy, Garcia could factor into that mix—especially as the team has expressed a need to monitor the innings for at least three of those other starters.

Garcia is under contract through this season, with team options for 2016 and 2017.

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