



Mabry HOF Home Runs

by Brian Stull

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<http://www.stlbaseballweekly.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/1-7-15-John-Mabry.mp3>

Like so many others, John Mabry knows what it's like to be struck out by Randy Johnson, Pedro Martinez, and John Smoltz. But the St. Louis Cardinals hitting coach also has the distinction of taking both Martinez and Smoltz deep and singling in one of his three at-bats against Johnson.

“It was the blind squirrel theory on that one,” joked Mabry about his home run off Martinez, which came in 1996 for St. Louis. A couple years later, that success resulted in Lou Pinella starting him over Jay Buhner (0-8, 8 Ks) against Pedro for the Seattle Mariners.

“He owned me after that,” said Mabry, who finished with a career average of .130 (3-23) against Martinez.

As a left-handed batter, Mabry only had one game to step in against Johnson and clearly remembers his “approach”.

“Yeah, squat down real far and don't swing,” he laughed. “He threw me a first pitch fastball and hit it right back up the middle by his head and then he threw me about six sliders and I struck out two times. He made his adjustment quickly.”

Mabry faced Smoltz the most (.286, 8-28) as the Cardinals and Braves “A slider down and in,” recalled Mabry of his home run against Smoltz. Overall, he batted .286 (8-28) with the HR, 3 RBI, 3 BB, and 3 Ks.

“It’s cool just to say you faced those guys, competitors that they were. They were at the top of their game through your whole career and when you faced them you had to bring your ‘A’ game. They were fun to face.”

While his focus is on the opposing pitching, Mabry also sees why the Pedro comparisons are made to Carlos Martinez.

“Carlos has got a high ceiling, so he’s got a long way to go to fill that potential. Him getting advice from somebody who has similar type stuff, similar type body frame, similar type mentality—it’s going to be a positive for him. The sky’s the limit with his talent, he can do anything he wants. He’s just got to put it all in line.”

John Mabry (\$5) and Carlos Martinez (\$25) will both be signing autographs at the St. Louis Cardinals Winter Warm-Up on Monday, January 19th from 11a-1pm.

The [full schedule of autograph signings is available here.](#)

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