



# 500/300 for Carpenter

by Brian Stull

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The goal for every lead-off hitter is to reach base, setting the table for those behind him in the order, and then come around to score when those bats drive him in. Though he's been batting second of late, Matt Carpenter has met those standards—as evidenced by his 2-run homer on Sunday afternoon in the St. Louis Cardinals 6-1 win over Kansas City.

The home run marked the 500th hit of Carpenter's career and it when he crossed the plate it was the 300th run he scored.

"I had no idea until someone told me I had gotten it," said Carpenter, who was more focused on the Cardinals finishing the series in Kansas City with a win. "Not getting a win today would've hurt, going home on the road trip. But it's nice to end on a good note and then we're going home. Hopefully, have a nice home stand and we'll like where we are by the end of this month."

Carpenter also praised teammate Kolten Wong, who appears to be settling into the lead-off role of late.

"He's doing a great job—that last at-bat was as good an at-bat as I've ever seen him take and he's been doing that for a while now," said Carpenter. "I think we're a better offense with him hitting lead-off and me hitting in the second spot. He's doing a good job."

Wong has batted lead-off for the Cardinals in their last five games and during that stretch has hit .421 (8-19).

"Lead-off isn't an easy place to hit at," said Wong. "It's all about learning and understanding how to approach lead-off and just buying into it."

In that last at-bat on Sunday, Wong stayed alive with a 1-2 count before doubling off Joe Blanton into centerfield.

“I think he just needed to develop as a hitter and we’re seeing what he’s been able to become—a guy that can have tough at-bats,” added Carpenter. “That’s what the key to a lead-off is, is not giving away at-bats and he hasn’t given away at-bats all year, he’s been great.”

With his performance on Sunday, Carpenter is now batting .426 (24-55) against the Royals and .475 (19-40) at Kauffman Stadium.

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