



TOP

What Do We Do Without Albert?

JUNE 21ST 2011 BY UNKNOWN

What Do We Do Without Albert?

By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports

Sunday afternoon at Busch Stadium - the Cardinals have a 3-2 lead over the Royals in the top of the sixth inning - a scene that would typically bring a 'warm fuzzy feeling' to members of Cardinal Nation.

Jaime Garcia is on the mound with Wilson Betemit at the plate, with a 3-1 count. Garcia delivers a high fastball, and Betemit hits a ground ball right up the middle. Second baseman Pete Kozma fields the ball in the grass behind second base, and makes a hurried throw to Albert Pujols over at first.

Pujols - who hit a solo home run to give the Cards the lead in the fifth inning - lurches out to catch the ball as it is slicing towards the infield grass.

This is where things went horribly wrong.

Betemit runs into Pujols' extended left arm.

Pujols immediately drops his glove, screaming in pain, and falls to the ground near the first base coach's box clutching his left wrist.

Dan McGlaughlin utters four words during the FSN telecast that would make any

Cardinal fan cringe: "*Pujols may be hurt...*"

The crowd of nearly 42,000 people fell silent.

People watching at home fell silent.

For many members of Cardinal Nation, it was a shock that hadn't been felt since the death of Darryl Kile in 2002.

Initial reports after the game indicated that it was just a sprain - the initial X-rays on Sunday didn't show a break - but after a CT scan and MRI on Monday, it was revealed that Pujols had a non-displaced fracture of his left radius, one of the two major bones in the forearm.

The Cardinals have been hit hard by injuries this season - twelve players have had fourteen stints on the DL - and Pujols would be the third 'superstar' on the roster to fall to injury.

Adam Wainwright had season-ending Tommy John's surgery during Spring Training. Matt Holliday has been on the DL twice - once for an emergency appendectomy, and more recently for a strained left quad.

Members of Cardinal Nation - including myself - have one lingering question: *What now?*

This is unfamiliar territory for us.

Since making his first Major League start in 2001, Pujols has only been on the disabled list twice, but both stints were on the 15-Day DL.

Sure, he's had two surgeries on his right elbow (one for pain in the Ulnar Nerve after the '08 season, one to remove bone spurs after the '09 season), but that hasn't had much effect on his game.

Albert showed signs of humanity at the start of this season - April 2011 was the worst month of his already legendary career as a Cardinal - but he'd started to 'be Albert' again. From May 30-June 5, Pujols had a .444 batting average with five bombs, 10 RBI's, and 1.074 slugging percentage (#1 in MLB during that timeframe). Back-to-back walk-off home runs against the Cubs were just icing on the cake of Pujols' return to normalcy.

But the question still remains: *What now?*

In actuality, if Pujols were to have a significant injury, right now is about the best time for it to happen.

Think about it: David Freese is about to come off the DL. Lance Berkman has been an absolute madman at the plate this season; Berkman played first base for the Astros from '05 until he was traded to the Yankees in 2010. Matt Carpenter, currently on the Card's 40-man roster, can play first base. Mark Hamilton could be recalled from AAA Memphis.

The Cards basically have two options: move Berkman to first, and put Jon Jay in right field - either permanently, or until Allen Craig gets off the DL where he has been nursing a broken kneecap, or to call someone up.

Cardinals Manager Tony La Russa indicated that the latter was a more likely scenario.

"We need to call up somebody that fits in to the most needs that one guy can fit in," La Russa said in an interview with Matt Leach of MLB.com, "and deserves a promotion."

If they decide to go with the former, a big question from Spring Training will come back to the forefront: *How healthy is Berkman?*

Berkman has played the outfield almost exclusively this season with limited time at first, but he has held up well.

"When we were talking to [Lance] after we signed him and people were worrying about his legs in the outfield, he said actually first base is more stressful with the quick lefts and rights," La Russa said. "So getting Lance in a place where he's physically feeling the best is a real good answer for us - and can play the most."

The Cards' roster moves today will be the only indication of what is going to happen before the start of the three game set with the Phillies tonight; if no moves are made, I'd count on seeing Lance Berkman at first for a while. If someone is called up, Berkman will probably stick to right field for the time being.

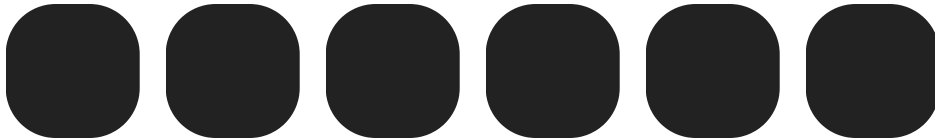
All I know for certain is this: it's too early to kiss the season goodbye. Granted, Albert is a **huge** component of the Cardinals. But, given the depth of the Cardinals' roster, I'm honestly not too worried. Albert will be back by August, just in time - as long as an appropriate solution is found during his absence - for a push to the playoffs.

Photo courtesy of Scott Rovak-US PressWire.

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[Go to post](#)



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TOP

DHS Alums Host Youth Baseball Camp

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It's always great to see people giving back to their community. Three young men from Dexter are preparing to do exactly that.

Drew Pixley, Tyler Tanner, and Caleb 'Bob' Miller, with the help of Dustin Hunter of Senath, are putting on a youth baseball camp this weekend.

The Southeast Missouri All-Skills Baseball Camp will be held at the DHS Baseball field at East Park. Kids between ages 9 - 13 are invited to attend the four hour camp, scheduled to run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 25. Registration for the camp is \$25.

“Whenever we decided to put it on, it was mainly to give back to the community. We all went to school at Dexter and [Drew] is the one who is hosting it,” Tanner said, “but we wanted to give back because the community has given a lot to us and we wanted to return that.”

All four of these young men either played or are currently playing baseball at the collegiate level. Pixley just finished his career with Murray State (Murray, Ky.); Tanner is entering his senior season at Williams Baptist College (Walnut Ridge, Ar.); Miller is playing at Maryville University (St. Louis, Mo.); Hunter is playing at Western Illinois University (Macomb, Il.).

“I found out that there are fewer little league teams than there were when I was that age,” Pixley said. “Baseball seems like it’s dying in this area. I was hoping to be able to re-vamp interest in the game and enhance the skill level of some of these kids. If the kids see better players start coming out, maybe they’ll want to be a part of it.”

Coaching duties during the camp will be divided by position. Pixley will handle catchers, Tanner will handle the outfielders, Miller will take the infielders, and Hunter will instruct the pitchers.

Make sure to check back with the *ShowMe Times* for more information on this great event!

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[Go to post](#)



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Miller Continues Career With Saints

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Miller Continues Career With Saints

By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports

Baseball Season is in full swing for the summer, but Caleb “Bob” Miller started his baseball season in the middle of February of this year. Caleb is another Dexter High School athlete that has continued his career at the collegiate level at Maryville University in St. Louis, MO.

During his tenure as a Bearcat, Miller displayed strong leadership as a two sport athlete, playing baseball and football all four years. With a quiet manner, his performance was always above the line of exceptional.

As a four year letterman in baseball, his love of the sport was shown on the diamond throughout his career at DHS. Miller enjoyed great success, earning All-Conference and All-District recognition - honorable mention his sophomore year and first team his junior & senior year - as well as being the SEMO Conference Co-Player of the year his junior year and the Standard Democrat Player of the Year his senior year.

[images/Blog Images/Local News/Maryville Logo.jpg](#)

Baseball was always a great love for Miller, and it’s a family tradition. Specialty Engineering has always been known for the partnership with the youth of Dexter and local youth league baseball programs. The Miller family can be credited for the support and organization of the Junior Babe Ruth program for many years.

It was always assumed that “Bob” would continue his career at the college level.

“Maryville, Florissant Valley (St. Louis), and Saint Joseph’s College of Indiana all recruited me out of high school,” Miller recalled. “They were the schools that were talking to me hard. I had a visit with Arkansas State, but nothing came out of that.”

In the end, Miller decided to take his talents to Maryville University in St. Louis, Mo.

images/Blog Images/Local News/Miller AB.jpg

“The location of the school is great - close to home, but not too close,” Miller said of his decision. “The educational program is elite; all my coaches are driven and motivated, they all want us to get better. It seemed like the right fit for me.”

With a 44 game schedule, the Maryville Saints are members of the Great Lake Valley Conference. The 2011 Spring season was challenging as the Saints ended the season with an overall record of 9 wins and 35 losses. (5-25 GLVC)

“We haven’t had a lot of success yet,” Miller said, “but we just moved into one of the best Division II conferences in the nation. The transition’s been tough, but we’re getting better.”

As a sophomore, Miller has been able to plug himself into the lineup very quickly, and (so far) has a career batting average of .240 with 15 RBI’s. He has also performed well defensively with a .941 fielding percentage and 36 putouts.

Miller was also named to the Academic All-GLVC team his freshman year.

“My freshman year I played in 20 games, but those were mostly pinch hitting or coming in off the bench,” Miller added. “I started all but four or five games this season.”

With hard work and determination, there is no doubt that Miller will continue to be an everyday starter for the Maryville Saints. "Bob's" love of the game wouldn't let him do anything less.

images/Blog Images/Local News/Miller Full Team.jpg

*The **ShowMe Times** will keep you up-to-date on Miller's progress with the Maryville Saints next season; you can read up on everything about Maryville athletics **here**.*

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[Go to post](#)



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Girls Wrap Up First Round Of Shootout

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The Girls first round of the Rib City Shootout was held in Dexter on Friday and Saturday (June 17-18). The basketball extravaganza, now in its second year, has continued to grow to record levels and is quickly becoming one of the premier summer basketball tournaments in the midwest.

The Shootout hosts three different age groups (junior high, JV, and Varsity), and teams from all across Missouri - as well as Tennessee and Arkansas - come to participate in the two-day tournament.

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Teams are guaranteed to have at least 6 games, with a maximum of 8 games, during the tournament.

A total of 35 teams were in the Shootout, including St. Joseph's Academy, Crane, Meadow Heights, and Dexter.

Thanks to the size of the Bearcat Event Center - three games can go on at once - as well as the T.S. Hill Middle School gym, tournament officials were able to squeeze over 100 games into the event.

The next round of the Shootout will be July 22-23, when the boys will take the courts again. The girls will have their second round on July 28-29.

Additional information about the next rounds of the 2011 Rib City Shootout can be found at **www.ribcityshootout.com**.

Make sure to check back with the *ShowMe Times* for pictures and updates during the next round of the 2011 Rib City Shootout!

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[Go to post](#)



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Kyle Christian Leaves for MAGA State Championship

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Kyle Christian Leaves for MAGA State Championship

A small town's growth can usually be measured by the number of young people that return to invest themselves into the community. Kyle Christian is one of those young men. As an up-and-coming commercial loan officer at Montgomery Bank, Christian has made the choice to return to Dexter and begin his career.

Many people remember Kyle through his early years as an athlete, an avid golfer and one of those cute Christian twins - it was always confusing to be able to tell Kyle and Matt apart - but you could always guarantee that where you would find one, you would typically find the other.

Kyle continued his golf play at the college ranks as a member of the Arkansas State University golf team. After completing his degree and his college golf career, Kyle returned to Dexter and began his professional career in the banking industry at Montgomery Bank as a personal banker.

Christian quickly became involved in the community. He is an active member in the Dexter Lions Club as well as serving on various committees at the Hidden Trails Country Club. He has also been a great encourager for young people with an interest in golf. But in all his service, Kyle still has a love for golf and the desire to compete.

Kyle continues to scratch his golf itch each year in the Missouri Amateurs Golf Association. Five years ago, Kyle began to enter MAGA tournaments in the area. Christian's development during his years at ASU definitely paid off as he has qualified

for the MAGA State Tournament each year.

Travels in those years have taken Christian to many great golf courses throughout Missouri - including prestigious courses in Jefferson City and St. Joseph - and this year he will be in the St. Louis area. The tournament is moved to different locations, offering a degree of challenge to golfers as they find themselves on unfamiliar courses.

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On June 1, the 2011 MAGA State Qualifier was held at the Dalhousie Golf Club in Cape Girardeau. Over 55 golfers were on site for the event, but only the top 24 would be advancing to the MAGA State Tournament.

“I started off rough at the Dalhousie qualifier and was about six over through five holes,” Christian recalled. “Then I got my game lined out and actually shot pretty well on the back nine.”

Kyle further noted that his play has continued to get better over the past two weeks and he is anxious to see how things go in the state tournament.

The MAGA State Tournament begins Monday (June 20) in Augusta, MO, at the Boone Valley Country Club near Chesterfield, Mo.

“The course is really great as they have bent grass from the tee box all the way to the greens,” Christian added. “It will be a pretty neat experience”.

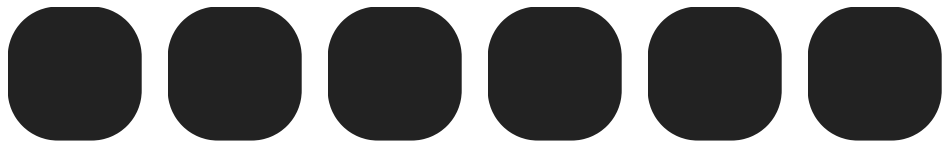
The tournament expects to host over 140 golfers from throughout Missouri. Each golfer is guaranteed a minimum of two rounds of stroke play. At the end of the second day, the top 64 players will advance to the match play (the golfer with the best score on the hole gets a point; at the end of the round, the player with the most points wins) portion of the tournament. Head-to-head 18-hole match play will continue until the championship on Sunday, when the two top leaders will compete in a 36-hole match to determine the state champion.

Results of next week’s tournament will be reported as we get them here at the *ShowMe Times*, and you can also follow the live scoring of the tournament at **www.mogolf.org**.

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