



CBM World Series pickers lean toward Cardinals

*By George Castle, CBM Historian
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The Boston Red Sox are hirsute, colorful and motivated; the St. Louis Cardinals are all business and unbelievably efficient.

Dull is winning out.

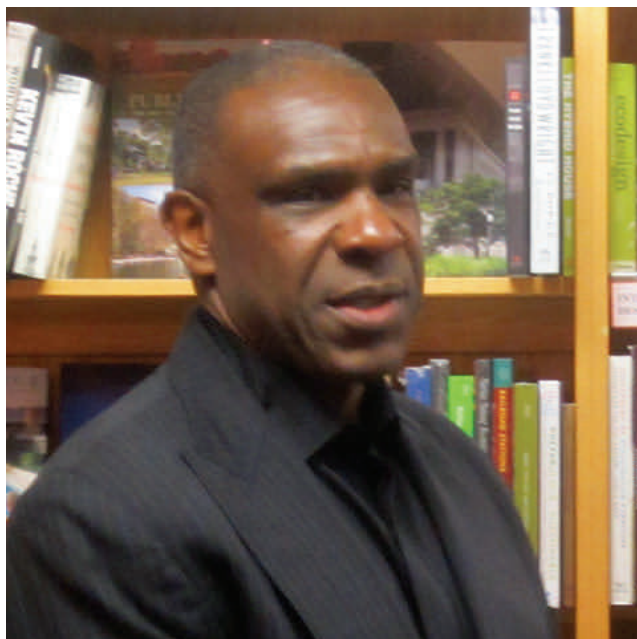
The majority of former and present players, announcers, ballclub officials, broadcasters and writers contacted by the Chicago Baseball Museum favor the Cardinals to win the 2013 World Series.

The Cards are clutch-hitting masters the likes that have rarely been seen in recent decades. For that reason, as writer's privilege, I can go first to pick the Cardinals in seven over a Red Sox team whose House of David-length playoff beards would put the Blackhawks' Stanley Cup playoffs facial scruff to shame.

St. Louis is getting top RBI man Allen Craig back from injury. With four potential games in Fenway Park, where the DH can be used, Craig can go right back into the lineup without displacing another productive hitter like Matt Holliday or Matt Adams. With the postseason-tested Adam Wainwright heading up a quality rotation, the Cardinals will have enough of an edge to come out on top in the end.

Dr. David Fletcher, president and founder of the Chicago Baseball Museum, apparently is psychically linked to my prediction. Fletcher also predicts the Cardinals to win in seven and overcome the Fenway home-field advantage. And, according to the boss, David Freese will rise to the occasion to garner World Series MVP honors.

We've got a lot of company in our St. Louis pick. But the Red Sox have their enthusiastic supporters. Here are forecasts of the World Series culled from all over the baseball and media world:



Hall of Famer Andre Dawson believes the Cardinals are solid in all facets of the game.

Andre Dawson, Hall of Fame Cubs outfielder and Marlins special assistant: “This is going to be a good one. I like the pitching the Cardinals are getting. Detroit simply didn’t hit and should have won (against the Red Sox in the ALCS). The lineup the Cardinals have kinds of match up with Red Sox pitching. Even though the Red Sox have home-field advantage, I like St. Louis in seven games. They’re strong in their pitching staff...bullpen, closer. They got something special going on right now. The Red Sox play well, but I think Detroit should have won. St. Louis is a class organization.”



Carlos Beltran's clutch hitting is a major reason the Cardinals are drawing so many backers to win another World Series. Photo credit [Johnmaxmena2](#).

Billy Williams, Hall of Fame Cubs outfielder and Cubs special assistant: “I kind of go with the Cardinals. It seems they hit it right every year. Wainwright threw the ball well. (Carlos) Beltran is playing outstanding. Holliday is swinging the bat well in left field. They got good pitching and good defense. Behind the plate, (Yadier) Molina is another manager on the field. Defense and pitching helps St. Louis. Boston will be in a bigger ballpark when they go to St. Louis. It might go six.”

Fergie Jenkins, Hall of Fame Cubs pitcher: “I think the Cardinals are super-hot. I think they’ll sweep. They got good pitching and they’re rested. They got four good starters. Molina doesn’t get enough credit. He’s caught these guys for such a length of time, they trust him. He doesn’t have to look in the dugout for pitches.

Goose Gossage, Hall of Fame Sox and Cubs pitcher: “St. Louis in five. Boston with all the changes they made, it just goes to show you can go from last to first. They’ve got good chemistry among themselves. They’re a gutty ballclub. But with the Cardinals, there’s no gimmicks. They act professional on the

field. It’s back to the old school. Those guys back in the day were smart enough to know to take what they give you, don’t try to do too much. The Cardinals do that.”

Dick Ellsworth, Fresno Grizzlies part-owner and the last Cubs lefty to win 20 games (22-10 in 1963): "I think the Cardinals will win the series. But I think it could go all the way to seven games. Boston's got an explosive lineup and is capable of scoring a lot. The Cardinals' pitching staff is a little deeper than the Red Sox."

Billy Pierce, “Go-Go”-era Sox ace left-hander: “Cardinals in six. Without the two home runs with the bases loaded, the Red Sox don’t score much (against the Tigers). The Cardinals play the game well. Like we used to, and a lot of teams did. They don’t make too many errors. They will play the bunt. It’s going back to the Fifties. One run at a time. Most games that I’ve seen have been fairly close either way. Some way or another, via management or ownership, Cardinals come up with decent clubs and ballplayers.”

Roland Hemond, former Sox and Orioles general manager: "Cardinals in six. Adam Wainwright will be MVP. I've always liked that kid."

Bill Melton, former Sox third baseman and Comcast SportsNet pre- and post-game Sox analyst: “Go with the Cardinals because of their offense. It’ll go seven. I really think their lineup is solid. Everyone in that lineup can hit. I think the Cardinals can hit Boston’s staff. St. Louis can score a lot in the first five innings. (Jake) Peavy and (Clay) Buchholz are hittable.”

Vance Law, former Sox and Cubs infielder now a Sox minor-league special assistant: “I think it’ll be the Red Sox in six. I think with all the stuff going on in Boston with the marathon tragedy, everything is headed in that direction. I like their offense better than Cardinals’ offense. The Cardinals have a strong, deep pitching staff. The finesse the bullpen has with the Red Sox has been impressive – the two Japanese kids have done a great job. I like their starting pitching.”

Ed Farmer, former Sox closer and Sox radio play-by-play announcer: “I like the Boston Red Sox, they’re the best team we played. I also like the Cardinals with Beltran, Holliday and Craig in the lineup. The Red Sox they extend pitch counts. I like their bullpen a little better. I think it’s going to go seven games. Both clubs are outstanding.”

Keith Moreland, Cubs radio color analyst: “Cardinals in six. Best team I’ve ever watched with runners in scoring position. They have power arms that enable the team to strike out a ton. Power arms vs. strikeout batters, it’s pretty easy. They’re willing to take whatever the pitcher is giving you (in RISP situation) to go in whatever direction. It will be an upset if the Cardinals lose.”

Marcus Semien, Sox infielder: “I think the Cardinals in six. I had Detroit vs. St. Louis before the playoffs started. I’ll still go with the Cardinals. They got great starting pitching, good arms in the bullpen and a lot of leaders on that team. Allen Craig is coming back. They got a lot of young arms in the Boston bullpen, so need some guys to step up. I faced (Michael) Wacha in the College World Series and we beat him in Omaha.”

Darwin Barney, Cubs second baseman: “I pick the Cardinals in seven. I think they just are one of the best teams top to bottom offensively, defensively and their pitching staff. They all throw pretty hard. Boston’s been pretty hot, too.”

Tyler Flowers, Sox catcher: “I had the Red Sox and Dodgers at the start of the playoffs. I had Red Sox winning it. I will stick with that prediction. It’s going to be tough. St. Louis finds a way. They pull mini-shifts on Beltran. They just have so many guys who are solid players. They get the whole idea of a team. I don’t think the Fenway home-field advantage will be huge, but will play a factor in some capacity. Red Sox fans are one of a kind.”

Josh Phegley, Sox catcher: “The Cardinals seems to be in the playoffs every year. They’ve got experience. The Red Sox have a lot of veteran guys, too. It’ll go six or seven games. I grew up a Cardinals fan. I’d probably like to see them win it over the Red Sox. But I think it will be a toss-up.”

Lester Strobe, Cubs bullpen coach and a St. Charles, Mo. resident: “Cardinals in seven games. I think these guys have (excelled in) every aspect of the game. Great pitching, solid defense and they do all the little things when it comes to the fundamentals. They take a single and turn into the double. That what a good team does – they have a group of ballplayers that does the necessary things. Guys who can put a bunt down when they need to. They’re not a

home-run hitting team, but come up with the big hits. I got neighbors all around me who are excited. This is a great baseball city. It doesn't get old for these fans at all.

Bill Bryk, Diamondbacks special assistant and Schererville, Ind., resident: "It's the Cardinals. I think they'll win in five games. I think the Cardinals have everything. The Red Sox have a lot of heart, and gamers. But the Cards have pitching, hitting and defense. I watched them in the playoffs, I was very impressed. The two best teams on paper were Detroit and St. Louis. The Cards are all business. They play together."

Phil Rogers, MLB.com columnist: "Make mine Cardinals in seven. The numbers say that home-field advantage is huge in forecasting the World Series. But Adam Wainwright and Michael Wacha, along with a loaded bullpen, shift the advantage to the visiting team in Game 1. It should be a great series."

Bruce Levine, 32-year Chicago baseball reporter formerly with ESPN-1000 and ESPNChicago.com: "Boston in six. It's a very even matchup. Bullpens are equal. Starting rotations are equal. Boston has just a tad more offense, a little more power, more run production ability. Both teams are relatively equal."

Cheryl Raye-Stout, WBEZ-Radio sports reporter-commentator: "Boston in six. I think it's going to be a great matchup between the two teams. The Red Sox have more well-rounded hitting than the Cardinals do. Pitching will be similar, and I like some of the Cardinals' starters. Key will be on the back end of the bullpen, and the Red Sox have been great there."

David Schuster, 670 The Score reporter: "Cardinals in six. Both teams are on a roll. But St. Louis might have even deeper pitching than Boston and that ultimately should make the difference."

Paul Sullivan, Chicago Tribune baseball writer: "Cardinals in five."

Fred Mitchell, Chicago Tribune sportswriter: "I like the Cardinals in seven games. Strong starting pitching, big-game experience and fundamentally-sound baseball should do the trick."

Daryl Van Schouwen, Chicago Sun-Times Sox beat writer: "Cardinals in seven."

Scott Merkin, MLB.com Sox beat writer: "Boston in six: They have been the best team all year and have had something special going since the start. Thought they would win before the playoffs started, so I'm not changing the pick now."

Doug Padilla, ESPNChicago.com Sox beat writer: "Red Sox in seven. Call the pitching a wash, which means the Red Sox will use their offense and the home-field advantage to come out a winner."

Scot Gregor, Daily Herald Sox beat writer: "Cardinals in six. They have a great balance of pitching, offense and defense, and getting Allen Craig back is going to be a huge boost. Nothing jumps out at you with the Cards, but they know how to win."

Mike Spellman, Daily Herald sports columnist: “Boston in six. The beards. Red Sox have that mojo going, and that’s going to do it. I think the Cardinals are probably better overall, but it’s all about mojo now.”

Tom Musick, Northwest Herald sports columnist and St. Louis native: “Cardinals in six. The return of Allen Craig (and his bat) will pay early dividends for the Cardinals, who also will continue to reap the benefits of their stockpile of young, power pitchers. In other words: Wacha Wacha.

John Reyes, Reyes and Reyes media: “I will take the BoSox in six. Defense and relief pitching. Speed in getting to the baseball on offense and defense. They can surprise you on the bases -- forget that they did not steal a lot during the season. From the seventh on they have a committee of relief pitching that matches-up well against the Cardinals. You can also say that Beltran, Freese, and Holliday for the Cards can flat-out handle their bats, but the extra game at the American League ballpark is the difference-maker.”

Sarah Kustok, YES Network reporter, former CSN Chicago reporter-anchor and Oak Forest native: “I’m going to go with the BoSox in seven. Expecting it to be a fantastic World Series, let’s hope!”

Luke Stuckmeyer, Comcast SportsNet Chicago anchor-reporter: “Boston in six because of the ex-Chicago factor – Ryan Dempster and Jake Peavy. Because there’s a former Cubs and White Sox player on the team, they’re going to win. Just like Ryan Theriot won (two years in a row 2011-12) and Mike Fontenot. This is it. Dempster gets one and Peavy gets one.”

David Kaplan, Comcast SportsNet Chicago and WGN-Radio program host: “Boston in seven. Red Sox power will win out.”

Todd Hollandsworth, former Cubs outfielder and Comcast SportsNet Chicago pre- and post-game Cubs analyst: “Cardinals, five games. Too much velocity.”

Dan Hayes, Comcast SportsNet Chicago Sox beat writer: “Cards have too much pitching and enough big bats to get Carlos Beltran a ring in his first World Series trip. St. Louis in six.”



Megan Mawicke of WBBM-TV believes the Red Sox are feeding off the attitude of "Boston Strong."

Jordan Bernfield, WGN-Radio program host-reporter: "Cardinals in six. St. Louis continues to hit in the clutch, and with Allen Craig returning to action (.454 batting average with runners in scoring position in the regular season) they'll have another impact bat back in their lineup to match a quality Red Sox rotation."

Megan Mawicke, WBBM-TV sports anchor-reporter: "Red Sox in seven. It feels like the Red Sox have something special going on right now - 'Boston Strong.' I think ultimately the biggest difference between these two teams is the Red Sox have a bit deeper rotation and lineup. I think it's going seven and that home-field advantage will be a factor."

Dionne Miller, Fox-32 sports anchor-reporter: "Cardinals in six. It seems every night they have someone coming up (as hero). The Red Sox have a lot of heart, but I think the Cardinals have the edge in pitching."

Rafer Weigel, WLS-TV sports anchor reporter: Cardinals in six. It's because Wainwright and Wacha can go in Games 1-2 and 5-6. Especially Wacha. No team in the majors plays better in October than the Cardinals. They'll get their second title in three years. They have no weaknesses. You can't count out the Red Sox with that bench. The relief pitching is pretty good, too."

Bonnie Bernstein, Campus Insiders on-line video company program host and vice president of content and brand development: "Red Sox in six. I think their turnaround story is phenomenal when you think about what that team was last year and what John Farrell has come in and done for them. There's something to be said about momentum. I remember that 2004 (championship) team and that closeness. The bond that team had and how that propelled them. I think what you see was reminiscent of 2004. They were called 'The Idiots.'"

Steve Dahl, longtime Chicago broadcast personality: "Cardinals in six."

Kenny McReynolds, WCIU-TV and ME-TV sports director: "St. Louis in six because they just know how to win. I think Boston will give them a heck of a challenge. They also have great chemistry. They seem to have an awful lot of fun with the playoff beards. The Cardinals got a great minor-league system. It's painful to watch right now, but the Cubs are doing it the right way like the Cardinals have done."

Brian Hedger, Sports XChange Chicago baseball writer: "Cardinals in six. The pitching is equal. Wacha gives them a little more. They can produce runs a little better. Matt Carpenter really impresses me as an on-base machine. Their ability to produce runs is going to help them."

Phil Meyers, SRN Broadcasting director of sports and media: "A fan's favorite team aside, it's refreshing to see that baseball's two best teams are playing in this year's Fall Classic. Such has been a rare case recently, with frequent Wild Card winners and lower-ranked divisional champions contesting recent World Series encounters. The 2013 season wrap-up is likely to see a hotly-contested final round of a postseason dominated by outstanding starting pitching --a trend that will probably continue between the Cardinals and Red Sox."

"When all is said and done, the Cardinals will emerge as world champions in seven games--making it a triumvirate of crowns since 2006. This pick comes due to the toughness of Adam Wainwright, Michael Wacha, and other St. Louis starters finding an ever-slightest edge over

John Lester, Clay Buchholtz, et al. It will be a World Series that won't let down even the most casual of baseball fans, and can turn on even the smallest of breaks.”

Tom Shaer, longtime Chicago sportscaster and a friend and supporter of the Chicago Baseball Museum: “I predict a Red Sox win. A well-rounded team. St. Louis is good, though. All this from a second-year manager who could have wilted after blowing a 3-games-to-1 lead in last year's NLCS? Very impressive and their FANS definitely make a difference.

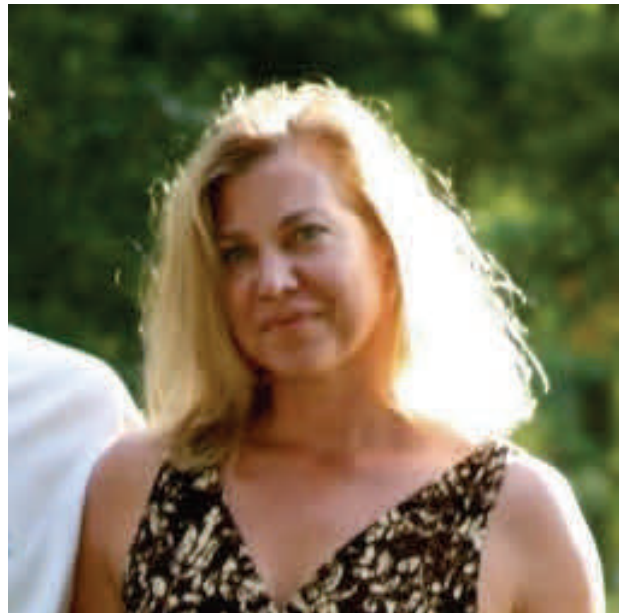
“However, Boston has home-field advantage and great fans, too. I'm concerned that Boston's bats can go silent now and then, but they required only one huge comeback win to get here-- they've been very consistent in beating two good teams. The Tigers' flaws had shown in August and September, but they were still tough to beat.”

Cory Provus, Twins radio announcer and Highland Park native: “I thought all along the Cards would be there. I thought it would be Cards and A's. I'm going to stay with them. I'm just amazed how they're able to re-tool and replace guys. I'm replaced by Matt Carpenter and Adams and Wacha and Kelly. St. Louis in six. I like the Red Sox bullpen. Their bullpen is a big strength. You look at how the Red Sox got to this point – when's the last time they got two grand slams in one series? I like St. Louis' starting pitching. Remarkable stats -- they're 8-1 in postseason elimination games.”

James J. “Harry” Rygelski, co-author of 10 Rings and The I-55 Series: Cubs vs. Cardinals, and a resident of "The Hill" neighborhood in St. Louis: “Cardinals in seven games. St. Louis' youthful pitching will continue to shine, though Boston will beat either Wainwright or Wacha once. Cardinals' continued clutch hitting will make the difference as both teams' bullpens will be tough. Cardinals and Red Sox have a World Series history, with the Cardinals having won two of the three previous Series, and they'll add to the lore in this meeting. Magical years for both teams: Cardinals won with lots of rookie arms and Red Sox cashed in on rebuilding effort. Each team played in its league's toughest division, so the best regular season record for each is significant.”

Rich Lindberg, Sox official historian: “My logic tells me the Red Sox will win, but my gut says the Cardinals will win on emotion. The good news, the happy news for Sox fans was seeing the big-money Tigers go down in dramatic fashion. They are stuck with Fielder for the next seven years. He will become the Detroit Adam Dunn. Couldn't happen to a nicer team!”

Leigh Ann Young, BaseballLoveStory.com blogger and daughter of the late Cubs coach Rube Walker: “My dream pairing was LA vs Boston. I am still trying to get over the LA pitching meltdown. You would think as a lifelong Cubs fan I would know how to weather that storm.



As daughter of a longtime Cubs coach, Leigh Ann Young simply cannot bring herself to pick the Cardinals.

“I am a National League girl. Which means I will pull for any National league team that is skilled enough to make it to the World Series. But, again as a lifelong Cub fan, I can NOT pull for the Cardinals. If the Cardinals win it will be a painful thing to watch, indeed. Call me bitter but that team, those fans....I can't. I just can't.

“Go Boston! Red Sox in six.”

Al Yellon, editor, BleedCubbieBlue.com:

(summing up in his blog <http://www.bleedcubbieblue.com/2013/10/20/4858164/2013-world-series-preview-red-sox-cardinals> on the World Series) “I don't think any self-respecting Cubs fan can root for the Cardinals in this series, even though they are a National League Central team. I was hoping the Tigers would get in -- now that would have been a series with great pitching, and a team for Cubs fans to really root for (Detroit, in case you missed the rest of the point here). This one? Meh. Maybe Boston and St. Louis will make it interesting, at least, unlike the last time they met. I'll settle for a week of close games with compelling storylines.

“Red Sox in seven.”

Mark Liptak, White Sox historian and contributor to Chicago Baseball Museum:

“I've got St. Louis in six games. The Cardinals pitching is solid with some of the individual hurlers throwing better than they have all season. This is a solid, consistent organization that knows how to win and I suspect they'll do it again even though Boston has home field advantage.”

Howie Schlossberg, Columbia College sports-journalism instructor and Daily Herald sports contributing writer: “The Red Sox, who take five hours to play three-hour games, bore the Cards to death with their slow style of play and win in six.”

Pete Caliendo, Caliendo Sports International president and member of International Baseball Federation Tournament Committee: “Boston in seven games, Boston wins because of their scrappy hitters, timely hitting and great set up and closer, who are Japanese. Final score in Game 7 is 4-3 Boston.

“Plus a former player of mine, David Ross, plays for Boston.”

Elliott Harris, ElliottHarris.com proprietor, former Chicago Sun-Times sports columnist and native of University City, Mo.: “I am confident St. Louis will do better against the Red Sox than it did in 2004. While the Cardinals don't have Bob Gibson anymore, they do have Michael Wacha and Adam Wainwright, so I think they'll be all right. Cardinals in seven (no statistical analysis was used in making this forecast, which was based solely on decades of being a Cardinals fan).”