

## National League Central

- 1 St. Louis Cardinals are the class of the National League and perhaps all of baseball. The farm system keeps cranking out quality players at all positions. The Cardinals features a balanced attack with pitching Adam Wainwright 19-9 2.85, defense with 6 time Gold Glove catcher Yadier Molina, and hitting with first baseman Allen Craig .315 Average, 13 HR, 97 RBI. In short the defending National League Champions are loaded with every reason to believe that they will be back in the hunt.
- 2 Cincinnati Reds have retooled both in the managers chair with new skipper Bryan Price taking over for the departed Dusty Baker and on the field. However, it is the departures on the field that will tell the story of this season. Shin-Soo Choo has taken his MLB leading .854 OPS to Texas while pitcher Bronson Arroyo has taken his 14 wins and 202 innings to Arizona. Perhaps the Reds could have survived these departures however they took a major hit when Aroldis Chapman was clocked with a line drive to the face. The Reds will put up a great fight all season all but will come up short for both the division and the wild cards.
- 3 Pittsburgh The Pirates had a winning record for the first time in nearly two decades they made the playoffs, won the wild card game and went toe to toe with the Cardinals in the divisional round. With MVP Andrew McCutchen in the fold the Pirates will be in hunt again for the division and the wild card. However, just like the Reds they will come up short mainly due to the departures of players like pitcher A.J. Burnett and Marlon Byrd will make it difficult for them to get over the hump. The Pirates will finish over .500 but will not make the playoffs.
- 4 Milwaukee Ryan Braun is back from his PED suspension however that will not be enough for the Brewers to contend.
- 5 Chicago Cubs join Houston and Miami as the third MLB AAA team. However, unlike the other two teams I can't predict when if ever they will contend.