

Division Series Preview

By Dave Sheinin



Chicago Cubs vs. Los Angeles Dodgers

Cubs 97-64, NL Central champions; Dodgers 84-78, NL West champions
2008 head-to-head: Cubs won five of seven meetings



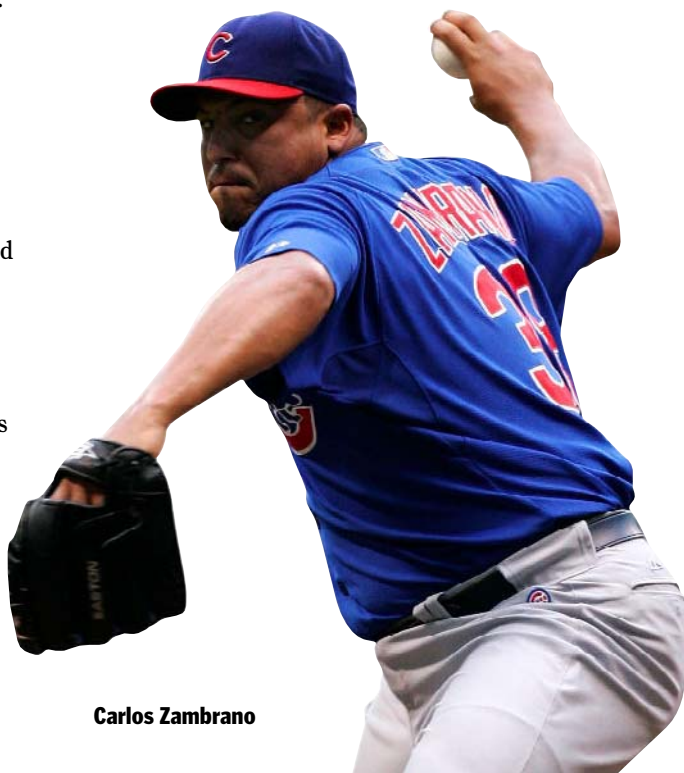
■ **Dodgers' Top Two Starters:** RHP Derek Lowe and RHP Chad Billingsley. Lowe (3-0, 0.59 ERA in September) may be the hottest pitcher this side of CC Sabathia; Billingsley is notably tough on RH-heavy lineups such as the Cubs'.

■ **Cubs' Top Two Starters:** RHP Ryan Dempster and RHP Carlos Zambrano. The NL's deepest postseason rotation also has RHP Rich Harden and LHP Ted Lilly. Dempster is steady; the volatile Zambrano is capable of following a no-hitter with a 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ -inning dud.

■ **Dodgers' Secret Weapon:** RHP Cory Wade. This rookie is Joe Torre's top setup man, and he has gone two innings in four of his last nine appearances. With LHP Hong-Chih Kuo unavailable, Wade becomes even more essential.

■ **Cubs' Secret Weapon:** RHP Jeff Samardzija. He held the opposition scoreless in 19 of his 26 appearances since being called up in July, including five stints of two-plus innings.

■ **Prediction:** Cubs in five.



Carlos Zambrano

GAME 1	GAME 2	GAME 3	GAME 4*
at Chicago, 6:37 tonight	at Chicago, 9:37 p.m. tomorrow	at Los Angeles, 10:07 p.m. Saturday	at Los Angeles, Sunday, TBA
Derek Lowe (14-11, 3.24) vs. Ryan Dempster (17-6, 2.96)	C. Billingsley (16-10, 3.14) vs. Carlos Zambrano (14-6, 3.91)	Rich Harden (5-1, 1.77) vs. Hiroki Kuroda (9-10, 3.73)	
			GAME 5*
			at Chicago, Tuesday, TBA

* if necessary, all games on TBS



Philadelphia Phillies vs. Milwaukee Brewers

Phillies 92-70, NL East champions; Brewers 90-72, NL wild-card winners
2008 head-to-head: Phillies won five of six meetings



■ **Brewers' Top Two Starters:** LHP CC Sabathia and RHP Jeff Suppan. Sabathia is the No. 1 in title only. Ben Sheets's injury forces some decisions, such as whether to lean on recently returned RHP Yovani Gallardo (knee).

■ **Phillies' Top Two Starters:** LHP Cole Hamels and RHP Brett Myers. Myers was 4-1 with a 1.65 ERA in August but 2-3, 5.23 in September. That's the Phillies' problem, though — a lack of dominant starters behind Hamels.

■ **Brewers' Secret Weapon:** LHP Manny Parra. Banished to the bullpen two weeks ago, he opened some eyes with a two-inning, four-strikeout relief outing Saturday against the Cubs, and his success against LH hitters (.233 BA, .680 OPS) could make him an attractive option for facing Philadelphia's Chase Utley and Ryan Howard late in games.

■ **Phillies' Secret Weapon:** LHP Scott Eyre. The 12-year veteran has been brilliant (1.88 ERA) since coming from the Cubs in August.

■ **Prediction:** Phillies in four.



Ryan Howard

GAME 1	GAME 2	GAME 3	GAME 4*
at Philadelphia, 3:07 today	at Philadelphia, 6:07 p.m. Thursday	at Milwaukee, 6:37 p.m. Saturday	at Milwaukee, Sunday, TBA
Y. Gallardo (0-0, 1.88) vs. Cole Hamels (14-10, 3.09)	CC Sabathia (11-2, 1.65) vs. Brett Myers (10-13, 4.55)	Jamie Moyer (16-7, 3.71) vs. TBA	
			GAME 5*
			at Philadelphia, Tuesday, TBA

* if necessary, all games on TBS