

= 2014 National League Wild Card Game =

The 2014 National League Wild Card Game was a play @-@ in game during Major League Baseball 's (MLB) 2014 postseason played between the National League 's (NL) two wild card teams , the San Francisco Giants and the Pittsburgh Pirates . It was held at PNC Park in Pittsburgh , Pennsylvania , on October 1 , 2014 , starting at 8 : 07 p.m. EDT . After both teams finished the regular season with identical records of 88 ? 74 , the Pirates were awarded home field for the game , as they won the season series against the Giants , four games to two . Despite this advantage , the Giants won by a score of 8 ? 0 and advanced to play the Washington Nationals in the NL Division Series (NLDS) . In addition to being the third NL Wild Card Game played , it is notable for the first postseason grand slam hit by a shortstop . The game was televised on ESPN , and was also broadcast on ESPN Radio .

= = Background = =

In Major League Baseball , the two teams with the best record in each league who do not win a division play against each other in the Wild Card Game . This was the second postseason meeting between the Giants and Pirates ? the two teams first met in the 1971 NL Championship Series , with the Pirates coming from behind to win three games to one after dropping Game 1 . The Giants ' most recent postseason appearance was in 2012 , when they swept the Detroit Tigers to win the World Series that year . On the other hand , the Pirates were able to advance to the playoffs in the previous season , marking the team 's first postseason appearance in 21 years . They lost three games to two in that year 's NLDS to the St. Louis Cardinals .

The first half of the 2014 season ended with both teams having three players on the NL squad for the 2014 Major League Baseball All @-@ Star Game . Madison Bumgarner , Tim Hudson , and Hunter Pence represented the Giants , while Josh Harrison , Andrew McCutchen , and Tony Watson represented the Pirates . During the second half of the season , there were several teams that were in contention for the two Wild Card spots , along with their divisional competition . These included the Atlanta Braves , Cincinnati Reds , and Miami Marlins , in addition to San Francisco and Pittsburgh . The Pirates performed poorly in August , and they lost seven consecutive games at one point . However , the team made a resurgence by winning 17 of the last 23 games of the regular season , surpassing San Francisco in the process for first place in the wild card standings . The Pirates secured their spot in the postseason on September 23 , while the Giants made it to the playoffs two days later . Both were the result of separate Brewers ' losses to Cincinnati .

With Pittsburgh 's postseason place secured , manager Clint Hurdle chose to start Gerrit Cole ? the team 's ace ? in the final game of the season against the Cincinnati Reds on September 28 , instead of skipping his turn in the rotation and saving his start for the Wild Card Game . This was done in an effort to beat the Cardinals to the NL Central division title , rather than settling for the wild card spot . The Pirates also needed to rely on the Arizona Diamondbacks ? which finished with the worst record in the MLB at 64 ? 98 (.395) ? to defeat St. Louis in order to force a tiebreaker . However , this did not come to fruition as the Cardinals narrowly won 1 ? 0 over the D @-@ backs , while the Pirates lost 4 ? 1 to Cincinnati . As a result of Cole starting in Sunday 's season finale , he was unable to pitch in the Wild Card Game on Wednesday .

= = The game = =

For the Wild Card Game , the Pirates started Edinson Volquez , who had a 13 ? 7 win ? loss record and 3 @.@ 04 earned run average (ERA) in 31 games started during the 2014 season . Hurdle picked him over the team 's other available starters ? Francisco Liriano (who would have been pitching on only three days ' rest) and Jeff Locke , who pitched erratically throughout the year . The Giants selected left @-@ hander Madison Bumgarner , who had an 18 ? 10 win ? loss record and 2 @.@ 98 ERA during the season , as their starting pitcher . He was chosen over Jake Peavy , given the southpaw 's superior record on the road during the season ; Bumgarner compiled an 11 ? 4 win

? loss record with a 2 @. @ 22 ERA on the road , compared to a 7 ? 6 record and 4 @. @ 03 ERA at AT & T Park .

The first third of the game was a tight scoreless pitcher 's duel between Volquez and Bumgarner , with the latter needing to throw just 28 pitches ? the fewest number of pitches he has ever tossed in three consecutive innings of any game in his career . Only one batter ? Giants ' third baseman Pablo Sandoval ? was able to advance as far as second base during this time . The game remained tied until the fourth inning , when Volquez allowed two singles and a walk to load the bases . The subsequent batter , Brandon Crawford , hit a grand slam . This was the first grand slam hit by a shortstop in postseason history . Up until this point , players from all other positions in baseball ? including pitcher ? had hit postseason grand slams . Volquez pitched until the top of the sixth inning , when he gave up a walk and was replaced by Justin Wilson , who promptly threw a wild pitch . Wilson then allowed the inherited runner to score on a run batted in (RBI) single by Brandon Belt , who ended up driving in two more runs in the seventh inning with another single . The Giants added their final run of the game with an RBI single by Buster Posey in the top of the eighth .

The Pirates , who had struggled to score a run off Bumgarner throughout the entire game , came closest in the bottom of the eighth inning . With one out , they had runners at the corners after two errors and a single . He extinguished the threat by striking out Jordy Mercer and having reigning NL MVP Andrew McCutchen ground into a force out . Although Giants manager Bruce Bochy instructed closer Sergio Romo to warm up in the bullpen ? in preparation of removing Bumgarner from the game ? the starter insisted on continuing into the bottom of the ninth . He proceeded to pitch a perfect inning to finish the shutout , giving up four singles and one walk while striking out 10 during the complete game . In contrast , the entire Pirates ' lineup batted .125 that night ; excluding Josh Harrison 's 2 @-@ for @-@ 4 performance , the rest of the team hit 2 @-@ for @-@ 28 (.071) .

= = Line score = =

= = Aftermath = =

By winning the game , San Francisco secured the team 's seventh NLDS appearance in franchise history since the permanent implementation of the Division Series after the 1994 season . They also extended their record for most consecutive victories in postseason elimination games to seven . This tied the Kansas City Royals , who had just extended their record the night before . Bumgarner became just the third pitcher ? after Sandy Koufax (in the 1965 World Series) and Justin Verlander (in the 2012 American League Division Series) ? to pitch a shutout with at least 10 strikeouts in a deciding postseason game .

The Giants played the Washington Nationals in the NLDS . The second game of that series saw San Francisco win 2 ? 1 after 18 innings . Lasting 6 hours and 23 minutes , it was the longest postseason game in history in terms of time elapsed , and was the joint @-@ longest in terms of innings (tied with the 2005 NLDS game between the Houston Astros and the Braves) . Although the Nationals won the next game against Bumgarner ? ending the Giants ' NL record of 10 consecutive postseason games won ? San Francisco triumphed in Game 4 to clinch the series 3 ? 1 and advance to the NL Championship Series (NLCS) .

The NLCS was played between Giants and the St. Louis Cardinals in a rematch of the NLCS two years before . The Giants won the series 4 ? 1 , attaining the NL pennant and advancing to the World Series for the third time in five years . They faced the Kansas City Royals in only the second Fall Classic played between two wild card teams , and the first since the 2002 World Series when San Francisco lost to the Anaheim Angels in seven games . The Giants won the series in seven games , becoming the second Wild Card team to win the World Series after being on the losing end in the first such series in 2002 .