Cincinnati gained on Houston and picked up a rival

Cincinnati Cougars beat | 1981-08-31 | Games through 1981-08-30

Cincinnati lost to Houston in 16 innings August 24. The next day Alex Perez struck out ten and held the Mavericks scoreless for 8■ innings in a 4–0 win. The split was useful. The Cougars gained a game and a half on Houston over the challenge even though they went 4–6.

The trip to St. Louis shows why that progress has limits. The Cougars scored one run in the first two games combined. Jordan Pedroza drove in four in their 6–5 win on August 29. St. Louis won the last game 4–2, leaving both clubs 67–64, eight back of Houston and four off the wild-card line.

Cincinnati opens at New York. Before taking four more games against Houston on the final weekend, it gets another four with St. Louis at home September 24–27. A good start away from the division would give both of those series more room to matter.