

= Sig Mejdal =

Sig Mejdal ( born December 31 , 1965 ) is an American sabermetrics analyst for the Houston Astros and a former NASA engineer . He previously helped the St. Louis Cardinals make draft picks . Mejdal turned his personal interest in baseball into a career after being inspired by Moneyball in 2003 .

= = Biography = =

Sig Mejdal grew up in San Jose , California . His mother was a nurse and his father was a career army officer . In his youth , Mejdal played little league baseball for six years . He was a fan of the Oakland A 's and a member of the Society for American Baseball Research . According to UC Davis magazine , Sig Mejdal was " fascinated with the stats on the backs of baseball cards . " Mejdal graduated from University of California , Davis with bachelor 's degrees in mechanical engineering and aeronautical engineering . He later earned master 's degrees in operations research and cognitive psychology from San Jose State University . While attending college in the late 1980s , he worked as a blackjack dealer at High Sierra in Lake Tahoe .

After graduating from UC Davis in 1989 , Mejdal worked for Lockheed Martin 's satellite operations unit at the Onizuka Air Force Station . Mejdal 's interest in baseball was recreational until 2003 , when Moneyball inspired him to consider pursuing a career in sabermetrics . He attended the Winter Meetings in search for a job in baseball , but ended up working for NASA as a biomathematician in the Fatigue Countermeasures Group . Mejdal studied sleep patterns of astronauts on the International Space Station in order to optimize their sleep schedules .

While working for NASA , Mejdal had a side job as the chief quantitative analyst for Sam Walker 's fantasy baseball team Streetwalkers Baseball Club , which was participating in the Tout Wars competition 's " Battle of the Experts . " The fantasy team would later become the subject of Walker 's book : Fantasyland : A Sportswriter 's Obsessive Bid to Win the World 's Most Ruthless Fantasy Baseball .

In 2005 , Sig Mejdal was recruited to do sabermetrics for the St. Louis Cardinals ' new analytics department . He took 22 months of data from college baseball games and ran it through an algorithm to determine the likely performance and stats baseball players would achieve . According to Sports Illustrated , " [ o ] ver the next seven seasons the Cardinals would draft more players who became big leaguers than any other organization . " He was promoted to senior quantitative analyst in 2008 and director of amateur draft analysis in January 2011 . Mejdal created a formula to predict the risk of injury to baseball players and contributed a section on injury probability to The Bill James Handbook .

In 2012 , Mejdal became the Director of Decision Sciences for the Houston Astros , where he supported recruitment decisions based on physical tests and historical player performance . Hiring Mejdal to apply an analytics @-@ based decision tree on their player choices was part of the effort to revitalize the team and address performance issues in prior seasons . He helped the team create the STOUT system , named after the combination of " stat " and " scout , " for making player choices . The system was criticized for de @-@ humanizing players , but after trading off some players and making new recruits , the Astro 's farm system became ranked among the best in baseball . The Astros also used analytics to persuade players that were uncomfortable with non @-@ traditional positions on the field to embrace shifts , which the team now uses very heavily .

In 2015 , Mejdal was one of the team 's advisers whose login credentials were believed to have been used to hack into the team 's database .