

= Sam Fuld =

Samuel Babson " Sam " Fuld (born November 20 , 1981) is an American professional baseball outfielder for the Oakland Athletics of Major League Baseball .

Despite being diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at the age of 10 , Fuld began his baseball career by twice batting .600 in high school , during which time Baseball America ranked him 19th in the country . He played college baseball at Stanford . There , he was a two @-@ time All @-@ American , set the school record for career runs scored , and established the College World Series record for career hits .

Fuld was drafted by the Chicago Cubs in 2004 . He was an All Star two years later in the Florida State League . A year after that , he was voted the Most Valuable Player in the Arizona Fall League . In the minors , as a result of his fearless defense , he was referred to as " a crash test dummy with a death wish " , a " human wrecking ball act " , a " wall magnet " , and a " manager 's dream and a trainer 's worst nightmare . "

Fuld made his major league debut with the Cubs in 2007 . He became a fan favorite for his acrobatic defense , and his tendency to run into outfield walls while making sparkling catches . Despite his batting .299 in his longest stint with the Cubs , the team never gave him a consistent chance , and limited his play to only late @-@ season call @-@ ups over three years . After the 2010 season , he was traded to the Tampa Bay Rays . Fuld made the Rays ' 2011 opening day roster , and won the jobs of starting left fielder and leadoff hitter by mid @-@ April . Due to early @-@ season heroics , including a " Superman @-@ esque " catch , he was dubbed " Superman " , " Super Sam " , and " The Legendary Sam Fuld " . His catch was put to Superman @-@ theme music in a YouTube video , and tweets about him went viral . In late April , he led the American League in both batting average and steals . He played with the Rays through 2013 , and in 2014 he played for the Oakland Athletics (for two stints) and Minnesota Twins .

= = Baseball career = =

= = = High school = = =

Fuld attended Berwick Academy as an eighth grader , during which time he made the high school varsity , and the University of New Hampshire 's baseball coach opined that he had the best batting swing of any player in the State . He was the team 's MVP , and a league All Star . He then transferred to Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire , where he played baseball and soccer , and ran track . Because of the climate , the league played a short baseball season , and some of the games were played as it snowed . Fuld batted .613 as a freshman , and .489 as a sophomore with 11 steals . He led his club to a league title as a junior in 1999 , as he batted .600 with 9 steals . As a senior he hit .550 with 6 homers , 12 RBIs , and 13 stolen bases . He was a three @-@ time team captain and four @-@ time MVP of the varsity baseball team .

He was named a 2000 Pre @-@ season First Team All @-@ American by Baseball America , Collegiate Baseball , USA Today , and Fox Sports . Fuld was also listed 19th among the 100 Top High School Prospects of 2000 by Baseball America , and selected the New Hampshire 2000 Gatorade High School Player of the Year . He was also a four @-@ time Central New England Prep School Baseball League All @-@ Conference player .

Fuld also played from 1998 to 2000 with the Dover Post 8 American Legion team . With them , he earned 2000 New Hampshire State Tournament MVP honors . He also led his club to a state championship .

= = = College = = =

A total of 94 colleges approached Fuld after high school , and he chose to attend Stanford University . He was an economics major there , ultimately graduating in 2004 with a 3 @. 15 GPA

. He was a star two @-@ time All @-@ American , record @-@ setting 4 @-@ year starter in center field for the Cardinal , playing alongside future major leaguers Carlos Quentin and Jed Lowrie .

In 2001 , as a freshman , he batted .357 as he established himself as the team 's leadoff hitter . Fuld was fifth in the Pacific @-@ 10 (Pac @-@ 10) conference in runs scored (56) , sixth in walks (32) , and ninth in hits (81) . In the post @-@ season he hit .396 . He earned NCBWA Third Team All @-@ American honors , and was named a Baseball America Second Team Freshman All @-@ American , All @-@ College World Series , All @-@ NCAA Regional , All @-@ Pac @-@ 10 , and a Collegiate Baseball Honorable Mention Freshman All @-@ American .

As a sophomore in 2002 , he led the Pac @-@ 10 in hits (110) , breaking Stanford 's single @-@ season record , while batting .375 , third @-@ best in the conference . Fuld also led the conference in total bases (162) , was third in runs scored (67) and doubles (20) , and fifth in triples (4) . He was named a First @-@ Team (ABCA , Baseball America , Baseball Weekly) and Third @-@ Team (Collegiate Baseball , NCBWA) All @-@ American . He was also named a Jewish Sports Review College Baseball First Team All @-@ American , along with future major leaguers Craig Breslow and Adam Greenberg . In addition , Fuld earned the Stanford Jack Shepard Memorial Award and Come Through Award . He batted .421 with two homers in four CWS games , earning a spot on the All @-@ College World Series Team for the second straight year . Fuld also played with Team USA in the summers of 2001 and 2002 .

In 2003 , Fuld was named a First @-@ Team (NCBWA) and Third @-@ Team (Baseball America) Pre @-@ Season All @-@ American . As a junior , he had 83 regular season runs , tying the school record (# 1 in the Pac @-@ 10) . He hit .321 with 35 RBIs and 10 steals in 10 attempts , leading the conference in triples (9) while coming in fifth in hits (97) , eighth in doubles (18) and total bases (145) , and ninth in walks (34) . In the post @-@ season his 24 career hits broke the College World Series record of 23 set by Keith Moreland in 1973 ? 75 . And commenting on his defense , Stanford coach Mark Marquess said : " If it 's in the ballpark , he 's going to catch it . He 's the premier center fielder in college baseball . " He earned All @-@ Pac @-@ 10 honors for the third straight season . Reflecting on his college career , Fuld said : " I think one of the things you take away from playing under Coach Marquess is whatever you do , be it baseball or anything else , you do it well and you do it with passion . You do it with excitement because , really , that 's the way to go about things . Not only in sports , but beyond sports . "

Fuld was drafted in the 24th round (703rd overall) of the 2003 draft by the Chicago Cubs , but did not sign . Marquess thought that Fuld was drafted relatively late because of his size . At 5 ft 10 in , he is not as tall as most major league outfielders . But Fuld said of the Cubs ' bid : " It was a generous offer . It was a tough choice . " He then batted .361 with 14 RBIs and 10 stolen bases in the summer of 2003 for the Hyannis Mets in the Cape Cod League , and was voted a Cape Cod League All Star .

Before the 2004 season , Fuld was named a First @-@ Team (NCBWA) , Second @-@ Team (Louisville Slugger) , and Third Team (Baseball America , Collegiate Baseball) Pre @-@ season All @-@ American , and an Honorable Mention Pac @-@ 10 All @-@ Academic . While playing the outfield at the end of his last college season , he broke his shoulder , tore his labrum , and partially tore his rotator cuff . For the season , he received Honorable Mention to the Pac @-@ 10 All @-@ Academic Team and All @-@ Conference Team

When he became Stanford 's and the Pac @-@ 10 's all @-@ time leader in runs scored (268) , Fuld said : " It means a lot to break the record . Obviously , a record like that is more of a tribute to the teammates I 've had over the last four years . " When he graduated Stanford , in addition he ranked among the school 's all @-@ time top 10 in hits (353 ; # 2) , triples (16 ; # 3T) , and doubles (58 ; # 6T) .

Fuld said : " I want to try my hand . It 's been a lifelong dream , really , to play professional baseball . I just love it too much not to give it a shot . " The Cubs drafted him for a second time , in the 10th round (306th overall) of the 2004 draft , and this time Fuld signed , for a \$ 25 @, @ 000 signing bonus . When he made it to the major leagues , he became the 78th former Stanford Cardinal to do so . During the baseball off @-@ season , Fuld returns to Stanford to pursue a master 's degree in statistics .

= = = Minor leagues = = =

The torn labrum injury he incurred in 2004 required surgery and a year of physiotherapy . During that time he read Michael Lewis 's book Moneyball and got an internship position with STATS , Inc. of Chicago . " I was one of their reporters , which meant that I looked at game video and plotted the ' TVL ' ? type , velocity , and location ? of every pitch " , Fuld said . " They have this grid where you click on exactly where the ball crosses the plate . Play the tape , pause , and repeat . " Fuld observed later : " The beauty of numbers is that our minds don 't necessarily capture the whole picture accurately . Our emotions remember certain things for whatever reason , and there are certain things you don 't remember that 's the beauty of numbers . It 's fact . There 's no way around it . " He also began seeking out stats that were not already kept . " There 's so many statistics out there that I thought ' There 's no stats on foul balls , ' so I picked a few players and started tracking them , thinking I 'd find something " , Fuld said . But his bag that contained the notebook with all his stats was stolen .

Fuld had an impressive minor league career that began in 2005 , when he hit .300 with a .377 OBP and 18 stolen bases in 443 at @-@ bats for the Single @-@ A Peoria Chiefs of the Midwest League . He also had a 17 @-@ game hit streak , and turned in 7 outfield assists from center field .

Fuld batted .300 with a .378 obp and 22 steals in 353 at @-@ bats for the High @-@ A Daytona Cubs of the Florida State League in 2006 , in spite of missing part of the season with a hip injury . He had surgery for a sports hernia in the off @-@ season . He was named to the league All @-@ Star team .

In 2007 , Fuld batted .291 with a .371 on @-@ base percentage , in 282 at @-@ bats , as he began the season with the Tennessee Smokies in the Double @-@ A Southern League . " He knows how to play the game , when to take a pitch , when to work the count , and when to go ahead and swing away and juice the ball " , said his Tennessee manager , Listach . " He 's strong enough that he can hit the ball out of the yard occasionally . He 's a gap , line drive type hitter . He knows what type of hitter he is , and he doesn 't hit a lot of fly balls . " He was an efficient leadoff batter for Tennessee , with more walks (41) than strikeouts (38) . He was touted by Baseball America as having the best strike zone judgment in the organization . " He 's a very intelligent player " , added Listach . He continued :

He plays the game the right way . He plays the game hard . He plays the game smart . He steals a base when you need a base stolen , not necessarily when it 's 5 ? 0 or a lopsided score . He does it when the team needs it . He makes the plays . He throws to the right bases . He 's a left @-@ handed hitter . He can run . He 's a prototypical leadoff hitter in the big leagues His work ethic is off the charts .

Fuld was also touted by Listach as having the best outfield skills on the team , as he led the Southern League with 13 assists from the outfield . In August , Fuld was promoted to the Iowa Cubs in the Triple @-@ A Pacific Coast League . There , he batted .269 , with a .397 on @-@ base percentage .

Fuld played for the Mesa Solar Sox in the Arizona Fall League in the Fall of 2007 . On October 30 , he was named AFL Player of the Week , after hitting .526 . In 29 games with the Solar Sox , Fuld led the league in batting average (.402) , hits (43) , doubles (11) , extra @-@ base hits (16) , total bases (67) , obp (.492) , slugging percentage (.626) , and OPS (1 @-@ 118) , and was 3rd in the league in runs (20) and walks (17) , 4th in stolen bases (10) , and 5th in triples (2) . He batted .462 with runners in scoring position , and .500 against lefties . Fuld was named the 2007 Most Valuable Player of the Arizona Fall League , after being the season 's dominant player . He also was named to the AFL Top Prospects Team .

Fuld also won the Darnell Stenson Award for Leadership for unselfishness , hard work , and leadership , becoming the first player to win both awards . He donated the money he raised in an auction to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation . " This kid plays the game like it 's supposed to be played " , said Mesa Solar Sox manager Dave Clark .

In 2008 , Fuld started the season with the Triple @-@ A Iowa Cubs . There , due to his fearless

defense , he was referred to as " a crash test dummy with a death wish " , a " human wrecking ball act " , a " wall magnet " , and a " manager 's dream and a trainer 's worst nightmare . "

Fuld began the 2008 season at Triple @-@ A Iowa , but was demoted to the Double @-@ A Tennessee Smokies in May after struggling at the plate due to a right thumb injury . After hitting no higher than .245 in May , June , and July , he had a torrid August , batting .345 / .424 / .445 . Fuld averaged only 1 strikeout per 9 @.@ 9 at @-@ bats , good for fifth @-@ best in the Southern League .

Fuld had a " big winter " playing winter ball in Venezuela on the Tigres de Aragua , who he helped lead to a championship . He hit leadoff for Aragua , while batting .322 with 5 triples (leading the league) , 36 walks and 43 runs (2nd) , 16 doubles (5th) , a .425 on @-@ base percentage (7th) , and a .938 OPS (8th) . For his 2008 ? 09 winter performance , including walking nearly twice as much as he struck out , he was elected to the Baseball America All Winter League Team .

Fuld began 2009 at Iowa , and hit .286 with 20 stolen bases and 8 triples in 73 games , including .326 versus lefties , primarily playing center field until he was called up on June 30 . He walked 32 times compared to just 22 strikeouts in 319 plate appearances , and had a .309 batting average with runners in scoring position .

= = = Major leagues = = =

= = = = Chicago Cubs = = = =

= = = = = 2007 = = = = =

In September 2007 , the Chicago Cubs called Fuld up to the major league team . He is one of 37 ballplayers from New Hampshire who have made it to the major leagues . He made his debut September 5 against the Los Angeles Dodgers , as a defensive replacement . " I have so much respect for players like (Cubs first baseman) Derrek Lee " , Fuld said . " They 're great players . But to meet them and actually play with them and contribute and help them win is kind of a surreal experience . It doesn 't seem too long ago that I was going to Fenway (Park in Boston) and idolizing these guys . I feel like a fan at times . I have to remind myself I 'm a player . "

That month he was " forced " to sing Stanford 's fight song on the team bus , as part of his rookie treatment . Later in the month , he was hazed after a game ? made to walk from the park in Cincinnati to the team 's downtown hotel in a Batgirl getup , accompanied by Félix Pie in pink baby pajamas , Carmen Pignatiello (as Supergirl) , and Kevin Hart (as Wonder Woman) . After peeking at his outfit , before he had to don it , Fuld said : " I think it was Batgirl . I was actually looking forward to it , believe it or not . [I didn 't try it on] I 'm pretty sure I would 've looked good in it . Black 's my color . I never did the frat thing in college , so this would kind of be like that . " In mid @-@ September , as Manager Lou Piniella had still not given Fuld an at bat , someone on the team hung a " Moonlight Graham " sign in Fuld 's locker .

Against the Pittsburgh Pirates on September 22 , 2007 , playing right field as a defensive replacement , Fuld raced back and made a " spectacular " , " daredevil " , jarring catch just left of the 368 @-@ foot @-@ marker in right @-@ center field at Wrigley Field , slamming at full speed into the ivy @-@ covered brick wall , and robbing the Pirates ' Nyjer Morgan of extra bases . In his next motion , Fuld then bounced off the bricks and wheeled , firing a one @-@ hop strike to double off a Pirates baserunner at first base (see video of Fuld catch and throw to first) . The home crowd of 47 @,@ 271 erupted , giving him a deafening standing ovation , and the Cubs who were on the field waited in front of his dugout to congratulate him . Thousands of fans chanted " Sam @-@ my ! Sam @-@ my ! " when he next came to bat . " That was amazing " , said Fuld . " They were going crazy . " General Manager Jim Hendry said : " That 's as good a play as I 've seen by a Cubs player at Wrigley Field since I 've been here . " The play later made ESPN on Baseball Tonight as the # 1 web gem of the day . After the season , Paul Sullivan of the Chicago Tribune cited it as the Cubs ' "

Play of the Year . " Many Cub fans refer to it as : " The Catch . "

===== 2008 =====

In 2008 , Fuld pushed Pie for the center field spot during spring training . Piniella said that Pie was only " a head or nose in front " of Fuld , and commented :

[Fuld] ' s the type of kid who can catch your eye in one day . But the more you watch him , the more you look at his particular skills , he impresses you . He 's an athlete and has really good actions in the outfield , and then he plays a small man 's game with the bat , which is what he should do ? hits the ball all over , puts it in play , keeps it on the ground .

Hendry observed : " [Fuld] can run . He 's a tremendous defensive player . " Hendry also indicated that Fuld was among the club 's untouchables , saying : " We 're not going to trade [Fuld] . It 's pretty simple . " In late March , however , Piniella chose Pie to open the season as the starting center fielder over Fuld , and sent Fuld down to the minor leagues .

===== 2009 =====

Fuld played for the Cubs in spring training in 2009 , but was sent down to their AAA team in late March to work on stealing bases . He was called back up on June 30 . Hendry said : " Sammy has been really hot . This will let Lou (manager Piniella) mix and match with outfield defense until Reed (Johnson) comes back . "

On July 1 , 2009 , Fuld recorded his first major league hit in his first major league start of the season , and second start of his career . Leading off the game Fuld hit a double against Virgil Vasquez of the Pittsburgh Pirates at PNC Park . " It felt great to get the first one out of the way in the first inning " , Fuld said . " It kind of took the edge off the rest of the night . I felt comfortable all night long ? I really couldn 't have asked for a better night . " In the fourth inning Fuld made a sliding catch of a sinking liner (see video of Fuld 's sliding catch robbing Vazquez of a hit) , and in the fifth inning he fielded a single and threw out Jack Wilson at home (see video) . " It was huge " , said Cubs starter Randy Wells . " Sam Fuld , man , he gets to so many balls . He made a [heck] of a play throwing that guy out ? the perfect throw . " The following month , he crashed into the left field wall while making a sliding catch in a game against the Dodgers (see video of Fuld making wall @-@ crashing catch) .

Asked which player he would most like to switch positions with , Geovany Soto said :

" I would like to change with Sam Fuld for a play in the outfield . He 's running in the outfield , and all of a sudden he makes that catch , two inches before he hits the ground . Oh , my God , he lays out and then hits the ground ? that 's amazing . I 'd like to know what it 's like to dive and catch the ball like that . "

Fuld hit the first home run of his major league career in the final game of the Cubs ' 2009 season , on October 4 at Wrigley Field . He finished the season batting .299 , and with the highest on @-@ base percentage (.409) of any Cubs player with 100 or more plate appearances .

===== 2010 =====

Carrie Muskat , the Cubs ' MLB.com beat reporter , wrote on March 1 , 2010 , that : " I can see Fuld making the Cubs ' Opening Day roster ... Fuld has shown he can handle the part @-@ time workload , can play all three positions , and can be used as a defensive sub or pinch @-@ runner . " On March 30 , however , the Cubs sent him down to AAA Iowa . Piniella remarked : " The decisions weren 't easy . " He was called up to Chicago for the first time in the 2010 season on August 19 , and ended the season with only a handful of at bats .

Baseball writer Rob Neyer , noting that this followed Fuld batting .299 with a .409 on @-@ base percentage for the Cubs , wrote :

don 't you think you could find a place for a fast guy who gets on base and plays great defense ? The Cubs did find a place for him . No , not Wrigley Field . Not Heaven , either . Iowa . Again .

Where Fuld posted a .383 on @-@ base percentage I 'm telling you , there are worse fourth outfielders on half the teams in the majors right now .

A writer for the American Spectator later mused : " what were the Cubs thinking ... ? ... perhaps decision makers ... didn 't ... pencil him into lineup cards because they were prejudiced against players of Fuld 's stature . But those who don 't believe guys of Fuld 's size can be solid major league players should be sentenced to sit in the corner under the dunce hat , and read Joe Morgan 's statistics over and over . "

= = = Tampa Bay Rays = = =

= = = = 2011 = = = =

The Cubs had never given Fuld an extended chance . They instead limited his play to late @-@ season call @-@ ups over three years , including just 40 starts . After the 2010 season , they traded him to the Tampa Bay Rays , who had wanted him for a long time . He was traded with minor leaguers Hak @-@ Ju Lee , Brandon Guyer , Robinson Chirinos , and Chris Archer for starting pitcher Matt Garza , outfielder Fernando Perez , and Zac Rosscup .

Manager Joe Maddon noted Fuld 's outstanding walks @-@ to @-@ strikeouts ratio , which Maddon referred to as " freaky @-@ weird " : 325 walks vs. 272 strikeouts in his professional career . Maddon said : " He 's a major @-@ league baseball player right now He 's been needing opportunity ; he 's probably going to get the opportunity here right now . " He also observed that Fuld is a :

very , very good defender . He has really great instincts out there , and a fine arm . He works excellent at @-@ bats If somebody were to get hurt , this guy could fill in on a regular basis for a while . He 's not going to be overwhelmed by anything . Great makeup He 's a pretty tough kid .

Rays hitting coach Derek Shelton observed that : " [Fuld 's] contact ratio is off the charts . He has probably one of the shortest swings I 've ever seen . " General manager Andrew Friedman said : " He 's a guy with a very interesting profile . He 's a plus defender in all three (outfield) spots , with superior contact skills , and a really good ability to discern balls and strikes ... and an ability to hit line drives with ... high frequency . "

Fuld made the team 's Opening Day roster , his first in the majors , as its fourth outfielder , and a late @-@ inning weapon off the bench , speedster pinch runner , and defensive replacement . Tommy Rancel of ESPN described him as : " Tampa Bay 's version of Brett Gardner ; albeit in a reduced role " . However , with Manny Ramirez sudden retirement , left fielder Johnny Damon became the team 's DH expanding Fuld 's role . On April 7 , he stole a career @-@ high 3 bases in one game , and Maddon began penciling him into the lineup as the team 's everyday leadoff hitter .

On April 9 , playing right field against the Chicago White Sox who had the bases loaded with two out in a very close game , Fuld made a spectacular catch . The Tampa Tribune called it " one of the best catches in team history " , and the St. Petersburg Times called it " Superman @-@ esque " . Fuld ran full speed from shallow right @-@ center after a ball hit into the right field corner by Juan Pierre , left the ground at the last instant in a full @-@ out , full @-@ extension dive , made a back @-@ handed catch with his body parallel to the ground , and then slid chest @-@ down across the warning track , bloodying his arms and legs (see video) . Rays center fielder B.J. Upton said : " Oh my god , oh my . I thought he was going to dive into the [wall] I was screaming from center field when he caught it . ' Great catch ! ' Should be play of the year so far . " Pitcher Wade Davis said : " I 've never seen a catch that good in person . " White Sox catcher A. J. Pierzynski observed : " that catch ... is one of the best catches I 've ever seen . Honestly , he ran like 50 yards to get to that ball . It was an incredible catch ... an amazing play . " ESPN 's Baseball Tonight program featured it as a web gem , it was # 1 on ESPN 's top plays of the weekend , SportsCenter named it as the best of its top @-@ 10 plays , and MLB Network named it a Play of the Week . His superhero status spread on the internet by late April , with the Toronto Sun writing : " Fuld ranks in the Top 10 in batting average , runs , and triples , and also leads the AL in stolen bases and YouTube hits , especially video hits

for a catch in Chicago diving towards the right field corner onto the warning track that has been set to a Superman theme . "

Maddon noted : " His defense has been spectacular ? tremendous defense . He 's ... a clinician out there . He pretty much does everything right . " Later in the month Maddon compared Fuld 's play favorably to that of Gold Glove left fielder Carl Crawford , saying that Fuld had a better arm , and compared his style of play to that of former perennial Gold Glove center fielder Jim Edmonds .

On April 11 , as a reporter for major league baseball described it , Fuld " turned Fenway Park into his personal playground . " Fuld missed hitting for the cycle only because he opted to stretch a single into a double . He had already hit a double , triple , and home run in a game against the Boston Red Sox when he came up in the 9th inning , in a runaway game which the Rays won 16 ? 5 . Had he stopped at first base , he would have been just the second player in Tampa Bay Rays history to hit for the cycle , joining B.J. Upton . Maddon observed that Fuld 's refusal to stay at first " speaks to Sam 's integrity , right there . He plays with such zeal and intelligence , he 's just fun to watch ... I know a lot of guys who would have stopped . Some guys in the dugout said they would have slid into first base . " He became the fifth player in Tampa Bay history to have four extra @-@ base hits in a game , and the first since Tomás Pérez in 2006 . His four extra @-@ base hits and 11 total bases were also records for a Fenway Park debut .

His " Superman " YouTube video was joked about on Twitter with tweets at the # LegendofSamFuld hash tag , such as " Sam Fuld was once intentionally walked while in the on deck circle " , " The Red Sox check under their bed for Sam Fuld " , and Maddon 's favorite : " Superman wears a Sam Fuld T @-@ shirt to bed . " Though not a Twitter user , Fuld caught on quickly : When reporters asked him the next day why he could not stop the rain that was causing a rainout , Fuld quipped : " This is me , washing my planet " . By mid @-@ April , he had won the starting left fielder position and leadoff hitter slot with the Rays .

On April 18 , a week after his 4 @-@ hit Fenway Park debut , Fuld had 4 hits in 4 at @-@ bats against the White Sox . That raised his batting average to an AL @-@ leading .396 , to go along with his league @-@ lead in stolen bases . His batting average was the second @-@ highest in team history through April 18 in a season , behind only Fred McGriff (1998) . He also became the first Tampa Bay player with two four @-@ hit games in a season while batting leadoff since Carl Crawford , who did it twice in 2005 , and the first major leaguer to have two four @-@ hit games in the 2011 season . He was fourth in the league in hits (21) , fifth in on @-@ base percentage (.431) and OPS (1 @-@ .035) , tied for fifth in doubles (6) , sixth in slugging percentage (.604) , and was third @-@ toughest player to strike out (one strikeout per 14 @-@ .5 plate appearances) . As of April 25 , he was leading the AL with 10 stolen bases . A reporter for major league baseball , in explaining his rise to fame , wrote : " you won 't find any other 5 @-@ foot @-@ 9 ... New Hampshire @-@ born , Jewish , diabetic outfielders in the Baseball Encyclopedia . His agent Jim Munsey , observing that given what Fuld has overcome and how he plays the game : " He 's hard not to like " , suddenly received a number of calls asking for Fuld for marketing opportunities .

He made another diving , face @-@ planting catch of a sinking line drive , leading Rays pitcher David Price to say : " I heard that the world is covered by 75 percent water , and the other 25 percent is covered by Sam Fuld . " As of April 20 , Fuld led Baseball Tonight 's Web Gem standings with 18 points , which included Web Gems at each outfield position . A writer for The American Spectator observed : " he owns the 11 o @-@ clock highlight reel . (My sources inform me that ESPN executives are considering changing the name of " Baseball Tonight " to " The Sam Fuld Show . ") " In late April , he was placed on the American League ballot for the 2011 All Star Game .

The press and the Rays began to refer to him by the nicknames " Superman " , " Super Sam " , and " The Legendary Sam Fuld " . The Rays gave away Super Sam Fuld Superhero Capes to children at the team 's May 29 game . The cape showed a diving Super Sam Fuld in mid @-@ flight , behind a shield bearing his nickname .

In a game against the Brewers on June 20 , 2011 , he reported to the pitcher 's mound in the 8th inning and warmed up in order to give a relief pitcher time to warm up in the bull pen . He did not throw a recorded pitch , or appear as a pitcher in the box score .

Fuld finished the season with a .240 batting average , and tied for second on the team in stolen

bases , with 20 .

===== 2012 =====

Fuld initially injured ligaments in his right wrist in September 2011 , but re @-@ aggravated them on a swing in spring training on March 23 , 2012 . On April 3 , Dr. Thomas Graham performed surgery to repair his wrist ligaments . Fuld missed the first 96 games of the season , and made his 2012 debut on July 24 , playing in 44 games during the season .

===== 2013 =====

On September 2 , 2013 , against the Los Angeles Angels , Fuld pitched a third of an inning , not giving up any runs , and got J. B. Shuck to fly out to end a threat in the eighth inning . He pitched at speeds topping out at 88 MPH . He was the third position player to pitch in Rays history , joining Wade Boggs in 1999 and Josh Wilson in 2007 .

On September 30 , during the 163rd game of the season and tiebreaker to determine the last American League wildcard playoff spot against the Texas Rangers , Fuld scored the fifth run of the game , stealing third base and coming home on an error by Rangers pitcher Tanner Scheppers .

For the season , he played in 70 games as a substitute , which were the most by any AL player since Brian Anderson played in 70 with the White Sox in 2008 , and was one of six AL outfielders to start at least 10 games at all three outfield positions .

After the season , Fuld was non @-@ tendered by the Rays , making him a free agent . He was among the most popular players in recent Rays history .

===== Oakland Athletics (2014) =====

Fuld signed a minor league deal with the Oakland Athletics on January 4 , 2014 . On April 12 , after playing in seven games , Fuld was designated for assignment to make room on the active roster for Craig Gentry . Oakland was required to put him on waivers within 10 days , and could only retain him if he was not claimed on waivers by another team .

===== Minnesota Twins (2014) =====

Fuld was claimed on waivers by the Minnesota Twins on April 20 , 2014 . He played in 13 games with the Twins , hitting .250 before a concussion that occurred on May 2 after he crashed into a wall . He woke up with a headache on May 8 , and was placed on the 7 @-@ day disabled list that day . He had been starting in center @-@ field that past week as the replacement for Aaron Hicks , who had also suffered a concussion . After a setback in his recovery occurred on May 14 , He batted .274 with a team @-@ leading .370 OBP and 12 stolen bases for the Twins , in 53 games , before being traded .

===== Oakland Athletics (second stint ; 2014 ? present) =====

On July 31 , 2014 , the Twins traded Fuld to the Oakland Athletics for pitcher Tommy Milone . On September 30 , in the Athletics ' wildcard game against the Kansas City Royals , Fuld reached base 3 times .

For the season , Fuld batted .239 in 113 games overall . He stole 21 bases in 25 attempts , with his 84 % percentage tying for the ninth @-@ best percentage in the American League . He stole third six times , tying for seventh in the AL . His five assists from center field , where he started 58 games , tied him for fifth among AL center fielders .

== Personal life ==

Fuld is Jewish , his father is Jewish and his mother is Catholic , and has said that he was " kind of raised celebrating both " religions ' holidays .

He was ten pounds at birth , so big he was nicknamed " Sumo Sam " . He is the son of Kenneth Fuld , Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Professor of Psychology at the University of New Hampshire , and Amanda Merrill , a New Hampshire State Senator . He is also a second cousin , once removed , of former Lehman Brothers CEO Dick Fuld .

He got his start playing baseball hitting plastic wiffle balls pitched by his grandmother when he was three years old . As a young child , he carried around a copy of the The Complete Baseball Handbook instead of a security blanket . " He was only 5 or 6 and he was already computing batting averages and ERAs " , his father said . " He 'd sit in the bathtub , and I 'd say ' If a guy goes 17 @-@ for @-@ 37 , what 's his batting average ? ' What struck me is that he 'd perform these operations in very creative ways ? not just that he got the right answer , but his methodology , adding in a factor and then dividing by 10 , etc . I 'd watch him and say ' wow , ' just like I said ' wow ' when he used to hit . "

Fuld admits his height is 5 ' 8 " to 5 ' 9 " , but " claims the right to round up " . Shorter than most major leaguers , he chokes up three inches on the bat , and says : " When I realized I was going to be limited physically , I looked for guys in the big leagues who were little . I 'd buy baseball cards and find anyone under 5 ' 10 who played in the outfield , and say , ' That 's my guy ; there 's hope . ' " While he is listed at 180 pounds , a reporter observed : " if Fuld weighs 180 , it would have to be carrying all of his bats , plus the baseball donut . Despite his size , Fuld was playing in a 16 and under league by the time he was 12 years old .

In June 2009 , Fuld married Sarah (Kolodner) . The two met in high school . He had met her while they were fellow students at Phillips Exeter Academy . She is an athlete as well and , like Sam , she was voted the Outstanding Female Athlete of her graduating class at Exeter , having played varsity soccer , ice hockey and lacrosse during her four years there . She was recruited by Princeton University for their lacrosse team , became the starting goalie as a freshman and won two national lacrosse championships , was twice # 1 Goalie in NCAA Div . 1 Goals Against Average , runner up a third time , is # 4 in Career GAA and holds the all time winning record for a Princeton University lacrosse goalie (men 's or women 's programs) . They have four children , Charles , Jane , William and Spencer .

= = Diabetes = =

Fuld was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes when he was 10 years old . He recalled , " I was losing weight , I was thirsty all the time , just classic symptoms , so my parents knew something was wrong and the doctor diagnosed it right away . It was tough , but when I realized there was no other alternative , I just looked at it as a challenge . "

At the age of 12 , he met pitcher Bill Gullickson , who also had diabetes , and talked to him for 10 minutes . " That was enough to inspire me " , Fuld said . " Any time I can talk to young diabetic kids , I look forward to that opportunity " , said Gullickson .

Former Cub All Star third baseman and Baseball Hall of Fame inductee Ron Santo was also afflicted with Type 1 diabetes . Santo hid his ailment from others during his playing days , because he was afraid they would consider him weak . Santo later had both his legs amputated , because of complications caused by his diabetes .

Now , at least six times a day Fuld opens a small black case , withdraws a glucometer , pricks a finger (" It 's pretty painless ; I 've got calloused fingers ") , and checks his blood sugar (a 30 @-@ second process) . He does it whenever he feels he should check his blood sugar level , even if he is in the clubhouse or the dugout during a game . He gives himself shots of insulin in his stomach every time he eats , which can be as many as five times a day .

Fuld is also comfortable handling the kidding in the clubhouse regarding his treatments . " We dish it out pretty good about his insulin shots " , said his AA manager Pat Listach . " We always give him stuff about putting needles in the refrigerator , and shooting up in the clubhouse . He takes it all in stride . He 's a good guy . "

Asked whether he thinks about his blood sugar level when he is chasing fly balls , he answered : " For those brief moments , it 's out of my mind . I get back to the dugout , and it definitely crosses my mind . ' OK , my face is intact ? what about my sugar ? ' "

= = Recognition and awards = =