

Kyle

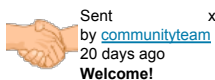


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Fielder wants a Prince-ly sum

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Written by [kylestack](#) on 08/03/2010 9:24:47 AM

If there is one thing Prince Fielder knows how to do on the baseball diamond, it's to hit a pitch long and far. If there is one thing he might have trouble with off the diamond, it's to convince prospective Major League Baseball teams that he'll stay in good enough shape to warrant a pricey, new contract.

Concern has grown about Fielder's 5'11, 270-pound frame as teams explore whether they want to spend the money that Fielder will demand when he becomes a free agent after this season.

Fielder and his powerful agent, Scott Boras, have hinted that fellow first baseman Mark Teixeira's \$180 million deal with the New York Yankees will be their benchmark for contract discussions. Here's the problem for Fielder: The 26-year-old is in the athletic prime of his career but he hasn't impressed teams with his level of conditioning.

He's viewed as a player who might be productive in the initial years of a long-term contract but who could struggle if his body's frame remains unchanged once he enters his 30s. There are worries about whether his already subpar defensive play could worsen with agility loss, if his body weight stays the same as he grows older.

On the other hand, his career offensive production is impressive. He averaged 40 home runs and 111 RBIs during his first four seasons with the Milwaukee Brewers. He should continue those numbers through his 20s but I have doubts whether he can keep up that production into his 30s. His body will eventually weigh him down with older age, less agility and less flexibility.

To his credit, Fielder has tried to lose weight in the past. For instance, he became a Vegan before the 2008 season. He's shown a willingness in the past to alter his body in order to increase his production for his team. He might have to show that same determination if he wishes to receive the contract he desires.



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