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#5 Brandon Crawford



Getty Images/Ezra Shaw

San Francisco shortstop Brandon Crawford has won three Gold Gloves over his 10-year MLB career.

BY MATT RAWLINGS Of the Keizertimes

Brandon Crawford comes in at #5 on the *Keizertimes* list of the 20 greatest Volcanoes players of all-time. The Gold Glove Award winning shortstop has spent all 10 years of his Major League Baseball (MLB) career with the San Francisco Giants.

Crawford grew up in the Bay Area and had been a Giants fan his whole life. He was a three-sport athlete at Foothill High School before heading to UCLA in 2006.

Crawford played for UCLA from 2006-08 and led the Bruins to the NCAA Tournament in three consecutive seasons — it was the first time in school history UCLA qualified for the postseason three straight years. Crawford was named the team MVP in 2006 and 2007. He was also named first-team all Pac-10 Conference in 2007.

Crawford was a fourth round draft pick of the Giants in 2008, but only played four games in the Arizona Rookie League and one game for the Volcanoes in his first season as a professional.

In 2009, Crawford played 25 games in advanced A-ball with the San Jose Giants and hit .371 with six home runs and 17 RBIs while slugging .600. Crawford spent the remainder of the season in Double-A with the Connecticut Defenders and batted .258 in 108 games.

Crawford opened the 2010 season in Double-A with the Richmond Flying Squirrels and was able to earn an Eastern League all-star selection. But after missing two months with a broken hand, Crawford was sent back down to San Jose to rehab.

After spending spring training with the Giants in 2011, Crawford was sent back down to San Jose to start the season. But after injuries to three key Giants players, San Francisco called up Crawford on May 26, 2011.

The following day Crawford made a historic debut. In his third at-bat of the game, Crawford launched a grand slam off of Milwaukee Brewers pitcher Shaun Marcum and became just the sixth player in MLB history to hit a grand slam in his first game.

Crawford was optioned back to Triple-A on July 31 but was recalled in September when the roster expanded. He finished the season with the Giants batting .204 with three homers and 21 RBIs in 196 at-bats.

In 2012, Crawford earned a role as the Giants starting shortstop. In 143 games, he

batted .248 with four homers, 26 doubles, and 45 RBIs. Crawford had a career day on July 20, 2012 when he hit the second grand slam of his career and drove in five runs on the night as the Giants defeated the Philadelphia Phillies 7-2.

While he was still developing as a hitter, Crawford proved to be one of the best fielding shortstops in the league early in his career. In his first full season in the big leagues, Crawford was third in the National League (NL) among shortstops in defensive runs saved (12) and was named the Wilson Defensive Player of the year at shortstop in 2012.

In the 2012 NL Championship Series against the St. Louis Cardinals, Crawford knocked in five runs and scored two, helping the Giants advance to the World Series. Crawford went 3-for-12 in the World Series as the Giants made quick work of the Detroit Tigers, winning the series in four games, granting Crawford his first championship ring.

Crawford remained the team's starting shortstop in 2013, batting .248 with nine homers and 43 RBIs — the Giants, however, wound up



TOP 20
Volcanoes
players
of all time

missing the playoffs.

In 2014, Crawford provided more production for the Giants offensively, batting .246 with 10 homers and 69 RBIs. He also had 20 doubles and 10 triples on the season. On April 13, 2014, Crawford hit his first walk-off homer off Colorado Rockies pitcher Rex Brothers.

In the 2014 NL Wild Card game against the Pittsburgh Pirates, Crawford made history once again, blasting a grand slam in the fourth inning off Edinson Volquez, helping the Giants to a 8-0 win. It was the first time that a shortstop hit a grand slam in a postseason game in MLB history.

Crawford led the Giants with nine RBIs in the 2014 postseason and batted .304 (7-of-23) with four RBIs in the World Series. In game seven of the World Series, Crawford hit a sacrifice fly in the second inning to give the Giants a 1-0 lead. Crawford then turned a key double play, along with former Volcano Joe Panik, in the following inning to get San Francisco out of a jam. The Giants clinched the series by winning game seven by a score of 3-2 and Crawford earned his second World Series ring.

Crawford arguably had the best season of his career in 2015, winning a Silver Slugger Award after post-

ing career-highs in homers (21) and RBIs (84) — both marks led the team. Crawford was the fourth shortstop in Giants history to reach the 20-homer mark. He was also named to his first All-Star Game and won his first Gold Glove in 2015.

On May 16, 2015, Crawford hit his fourth career grand slam off of Mike Leake and knocked in a career-high of six runs in the Giants 11-2 win over the Cincinnati Reds. Crawford also hit his 100th career double in 2015 in an 8-5 win over the Washington Nationals on Aug. 14.

Before the 2016 season, Crawford signed a six-year,

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