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*Zelda Hurd  
Junior Reporter*

# In the Zone

with **SAMMY FRIES**

Sammy Fries unleashes his inner Superman when he steps off a ledge 25 feet above the ground.

The 14-year-old started flying 8 months ago at Trapeze U, a school for trapeze artists.

Trapeze is a sport filled with focus, determination, strength and trust. It also requires learning, improvement and positive thinking. The net is the only thing between Sammy and the ground. (That, and safety harnesses and a group of trained instructors and spotters). But without the net, Sammy believes he could fall and die. Sammy has to have a lot of trust with the team of professionals around him. He is connected to a safety rope and a spotter eases him onto the net if he falls or loses his grip on the bar. Sammy looks so focused and serious when he is high above the ground. When he's down and off the net he has a big smile on his face. Sammy is amazing. He already looks like a flying pro. He's like a rubber band man, very flexible and strong. In my eyes he's a magical Superman who never gives up even if he doesn't get a new trick the first time.



Sammy has a lot of interests. He also plays tennis, skis, does indoor sky diving and acrobatic yoga. But when he's in the air in motion, he does his tricks so smoothly I literally wanted to say "Wow!"



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**Q What do you like most about trapeze?**

*A I like flying through the air and the wind in my face.*

**Q What is it about the wind in your face that you like?**

*“A I feel like I’m not part of the world. Like the present, living in the now.”*

**Q Describe the mood when you are up there.**

*A It’s indescribable...It’s so peaceful.*

**Q Does everything else go away?**

*A Yes, you just have to focus.*

**Q How long do you regularly practice?**

*A On average I do two hours a week, but sometimes I do more.*

**Q What trick is the hardest?**

*A The cutaway... From the takeoff point, you cross your hands and do a 180 rotation. Your hands and you are facing the other way, then you kick your legs three times, put them up onto the bar, let go and do a flip to the other person. I haven’t caught it yet. I’ve been working on it for a while.*

**Q What’s your biggest accomplishment?**

*A When I first caught my pull over shoot. It’s the one that’s like Superman.*

**Q What is your favorite trick?**

*A A birdie, or a birds nest. You put your legs up on the bar between your hands and push through. I like those because I can do them well while having fun.*

**Q What have you improved on the most?**

*A My flexibility.*

**Q What are the performances like?**

*A There are more lights and more people...it’s a big audience and everyone is pumped up.*

**Q How do you feel when you perform?**

*A I feel happy when I do well, but if I do bad I strive to do better next time.*

**Q What influenced you to do trapeze?**

*A One summer my mom did tight rope walking and it inspired me.*

**Q Have you ever gotten hurt?**

*A I’ve gotten rips all over my hand and it was bleeding for a week.*

**Q Is this something you think anyone can do?**

*A No, I think some people who have had broken hands, their bones wouldn’t be very strong.*

**Q What would you say to someone who wanted to try it?**

*A Go for it. Wear the right clothing. Don’t come in jeans and a hoodie.*

**Q What does the net do? Is it important?**

*A Without the net, you would die. It supports you when you fall.*

**Q Do you really have to trust the person who catches you?**

*A Totally. If you don’t trust them, then something bad could happen. They’re there to catch you.*

**Q Will you do this in the future?**

*A Yes, I plan to do it pretty much until I die or until I can’t.*

**Q What else do you do?**

*A Acrobatic yoga, tennis, slalom waterskiing, indoor skydiving—they don’t let you jump out of a plane until you’re 18.*

**Q Is there anything else you want to tell my readers?**

*A Definitely strengthen your hands up.*



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