



# JASON BABIN

● **JASON BABIN HAS** an extremely competitive nature. Whether it's who gets the first seat in the car to a game of rock-paper-scissors to hunting Grizzly bears in Alaska, all he wants to do is win. Even when it comes to small competitions between him and his two sons Maddux (6) and Talan (4), he doesn't like to give an inch. "My wife will get on me sometimes and tell me to let them win, and I always tell her that it's a competition, so that's the way it goes," he laughs. "Once I get into a situation where there's competition, like weight lifting, I'm always in it to win it."

That doesn't come as much surprise when you take one look at him. The 6-3, 260-pound defensive end is a hulking figure to say the least. During the football season, you can find him in the gym Monday through Friday. He says that since Monday is the day after a game, the workouts are a little lighter and the focus is to get the soreness out for the rest of the week. He works all of his body parts and uses lighter weights to get all the kinks out from battle the day before.

When it comes to his cardio conditioning, Jason simply stays in "football shape." "It's really the same principle for everyone in the NFL. The only way to stay in 'football shape' is to play football," Jason says. "So for the cardio for a defensive end, we participate in practices, mini camp, practices and games to ensure that we are always well-conditioned."

For Jason's diet, he uses a healthy family approach. Jason, his two sons and his wife all keep a pretty clean diet to ensure that everyone in the household is healthy. They eat a lot of whole wheat, fish, chicken, turkey and the occasional steak. "Bad foods" are pretty much off-limits to them all, so that means no deep fried foods, no McDonalds and no sodas. And although Jason has a sweet tooth for cheesecake, he tries to avoid dessert, as well.

Jason has always had a very active lifestyle, stemming from when he was a youngster growing up in Michigan. He was an avid football player and was also an excellent wrestler, winning a state title in high school. He says that much of wrestling

translated to his defensive football position because leverage is key in both. "When I'm going up against those guys who are taller and outweigh me by 100 lbs., there's definitely some feel involved," Jason says. "Because of wrestling, I can feel [the lineman's] weight shift and that's when I make my move to cut inside or outside."

He turned out to be a standout football player at the University of Western Michigan, but Jason says that he was a "free spirit" in college and didn't realize he had the potential to be a professional athlete until his coach Gary Darnell spoke with him during his junior year. Darnell said if Jason would dedicate himself to the game and put his heart into it, he would have what it takes to become a professional. And from that day on Jason bought into the process and was eventually a first round draft pick in 2004 for the Houston Texans.

Although he didn't find immediate success in the NFL, he had by far his best season last year with the Tennessee Titans, which earned him a trip to his first Pro Bowl. In 16 games, he accumulated 58 tackles, two forced fumbles and 12.5 sacks. He said the difference that helped him to finally break out was how the team utilized him. "When I was drafted, they had me playing outside linebacker and that definitely wasn't my best skill set," Jason says. "So when I played defensive end for Tennessee, I was able to show off what I'm best at and now I've proven what I'm able to accomplish."

Though he might not be a Tennessee Titan in the near future because of free-agency, one thing is certain. Whoever ends up signing this dynamic defensive star, success will be heading their way. ★

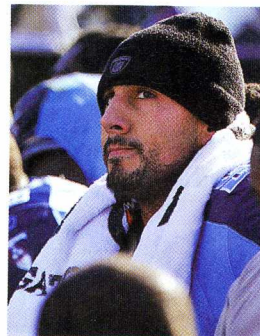


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