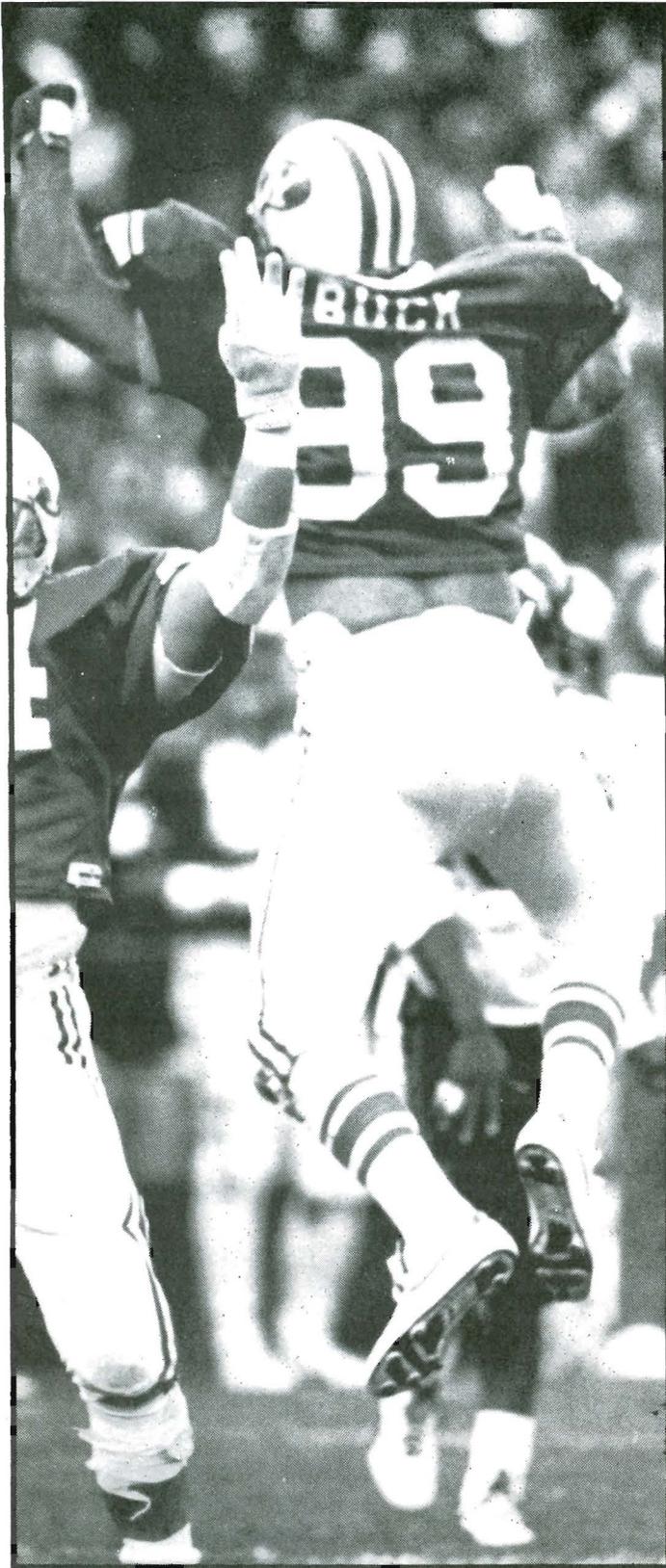


JASON BUCK

OUTLAND
TROPHY
WINNER



JASON BUCK: FROM WALK-ON JUNIOR COLLEGE
REJECT TO OUTLAND TROPHY WINNER!!

SPECIAL REPRINT ARTICLE

Jason Buck is this year's Outland Trophy winner. The significance is not that Jason won it but the tremendous obstacles he overcame to receive a lineman's highest honor. Coaches! Make sure every player reads Jason's story. Put it on the weight room wall!

"I had a burning desire ever since I was a little boy to play professional football," relates Jason. He declared his goal to play pro football after watching a game on TV at the age of seven. "I later swore an oath to myself that before I didn't succeed; I would die. And I really meant it."

However, along Jason's path to All-American accolades and this success he so desperately sought would be gut-wrenching obstacles. He grew up on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan near Muskegon. His father worked a 2,000 acre farm which was lost due to finances in 1969. It was then the Buck family moved to a farm near the small town of Adrian, in eastern Oregon. Poverty was a word the 8 Buck children knew well. That first summer, they slept under a hay truck. It was their only shelter. They used wheat sacks for pillows. At Christmas, the older kids usually went without. Jason remembers, "One time I got a pair of socks and another Christmas I got a five dollar bill."

During those hard years, Jason lost a sister and a brother due to health problems. When he was 15, Jason's older brother, whom he idolized, was killed in an auto accident at the age of twenty-two.

Being poor was not easy. Jason had one pair of jeans and three T-shirts. "They were supposed to last all year," remembers Jason. Jason and his family were ostracized because of being poor and being the only Mormons in the area. "But it was a dream of mine to be the best." Jason looked up, "I still feel like I'm not there yet."

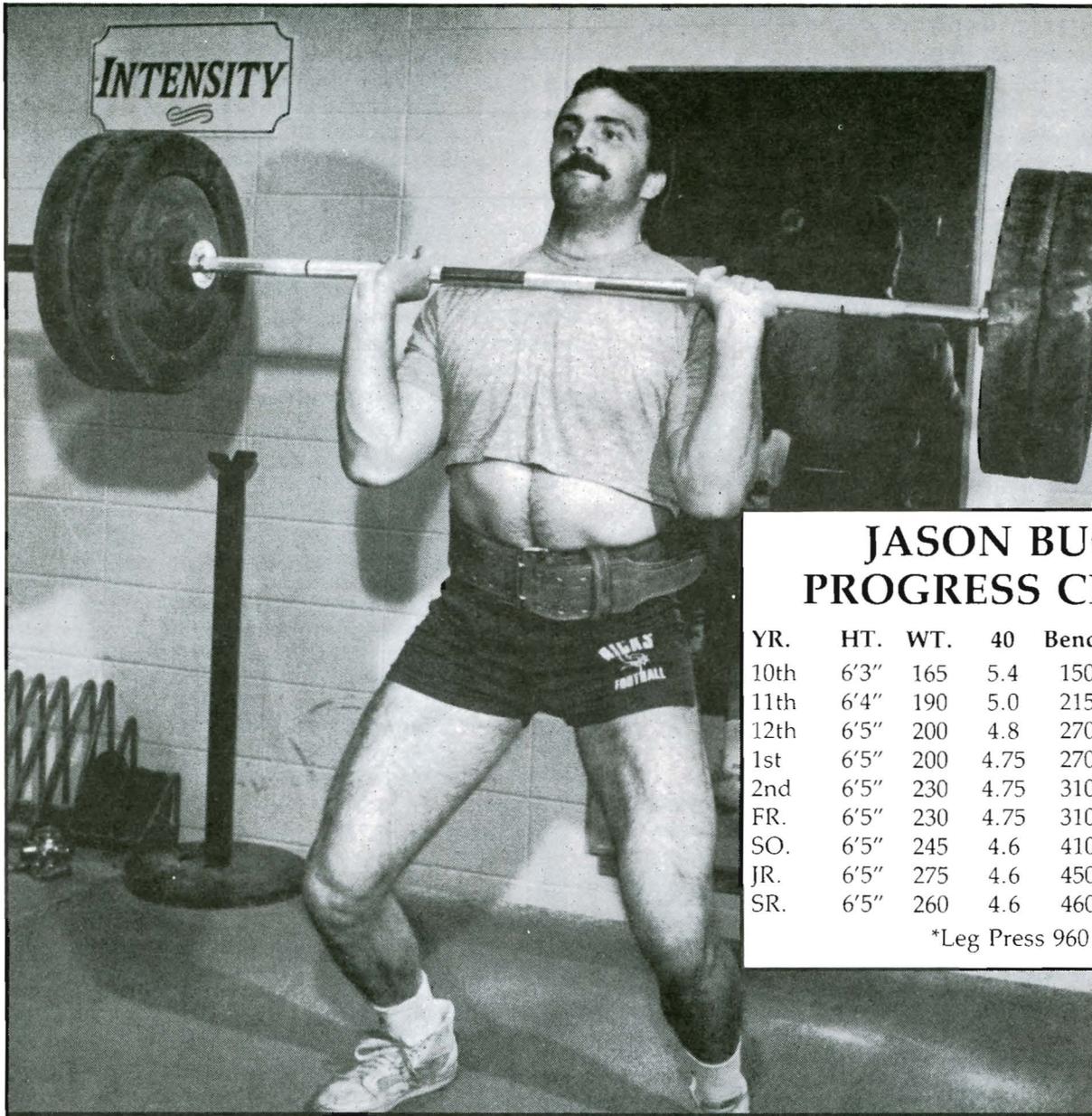
Adrian High School only had 100 students and Jason lifted weights on his own. The football coach wouldn't let him lift, so he'd have to sneak in the weight room on his own. Jason worked a lot on the leg press and ran a lot. Because he started at quarterback his freshman year, the other kids hassled him. "It seemed like 10 guys would jump me everyday."

At the age of sixteen, the Buck family was again forced to move. This time to St. Anthony, Idaho. South Fremont High School in St. Anthony has an enrollment of about 500 students.

There was already an established running back and it was tough for a new kid coming in at quarterback. In Jason's senior year, his team went 4 - 4 with the running back carrying the ball 30 times per game. In spite of that, Jason ran the ball 3 times per game for a 10 yard average and passed for about 100 yards per game. He did not play any defense! However, Jason did manage to throw two 60 yard passes, run for one 80 yard TD and was responsible for 300 yards in one game.

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Photo by Mark Philbrick



JASON BUCK PROGRESS CHART

YR.	HT.	WT.	40	Bench	Squat	Clean
10th	6'3"	165	5.4	150	*	*
11th	6'4"	190	5.0	215	*	*
12th	6'5"	200	4.8	270	*	*
1st	6'5"	200	4.75	270	*	*
2nd	6'5"	230	4.75	310	440	265
FR.	6'5"	230	4.75	310	440	265
SO.	6'5"	245	4.6	410	620	340
JR.	6'5"	275	4.6	450	*	350
SR.	6'5"	260	4.6	460	*	380

*Leg Press 960

He also played center on the basketball team and scored about 10 points a game and took in 10 rebounds per game. But, no coaches contacted Jason after high school. "We didn't have any films to show the colleges. However, I just kept thinkin' football after basketball." It was then Jason decided to walk-on at Ricks Junior College which was only 12½ miles away. Coach Ken Schmidt, now at Brigham Young University, offered Jason a chance to walk-on with 180 others. He began at QB but then switched to several different positions including the defensive line. But, Jason didn't have any money to go to school. He quit football after only two weeks and went to work back in St. Anthony.

Ron Haun was then about to become the new head coach at Ricks. "Coach Haun told me I'd never be a quarterback but maybe I could be a defensive lineman, if I put some weight on my frame."

"When people laughed at my goal to play football, it made me more determined than ever. I was going to prove them wrong."

Jason didn't really lift too much that first year out of high school. He was working to stay alive and to help his mother. Then, another hardship struck. Jason's mom and dad got a divorce. Jason's father asked him to stay with his mother, five sisters and one brother.

Jason reflected, "Anybody could have said, 'Well, I got screwed over. Nobody gave me a chance and now it's over.' I could have said, 'I got screwed over again just like I have all my life.' But I didn't. I didn't let go of the dream. I knew I was going back to play. There was never a second's doubt in me that I wasn't going to earn a scholarship and go back and play."

So Jason Buck worked for \$3.60 per hour hauling 100

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JASON BUCK

pound sacks of grain for nine hours per day six days per week. After work, Jason went to Ricks and lifted weights 2½ hours per day, also six times per week.

I asked Jason politely "Wasn't that overtraining?"

"I didn't know any better," Jason responded. "It was stupid but I just wanted to get better!"

Coach Ron Haun stated, "He just kept coming around and getting bigger, faster, and stronger." Everybody who's been associated with Jason knows of his hunger to excel and to really want it. We had to give him a scholarship."

Thus, after two years of throwing 100 pound grain sacks, the dream was beginning to come to fruition. Jason married his high school sweetheart, Roxi, who was also a cheerleader in 1983. Jason became a defensive lineman and had 17 sacks his freshman year.

"All the time he was here, he never came in and tried to negotiate for more," said Coach Haun somewhat in awe of Buck's accomplishments. "Some kids are in here every five minutes. But he took what you gave him."

In Jason's freshman year, one week before the championship game at Ricks, Jason lived on 10 boxes of macaroni which was all he and Roxi had in the cupboard. The players found out about it later. Coach Haun said, "We would have helped him had we known but he never asked." It was similar at Brigham Young University. In Jason's first year there, he and Roxi slept on the floor of an unfurnished apartment. He kept things to himself. Jason never said a word.

In his sophomore year at Ricks, Jason set a junior college national record with 25 sacks. He was voted the J.C. player-of-the-year. However, the honor which meant the most to Jason was being voted captain by his teammates. Jason finally felt accepted.

After entertaining offers to play at major colleges throughout the land, Jason picked BYU. He was named the Western Athletic Conference Defensive-Player-of-the-Year his junior year.

Jason thought back, "My marriage to Roxi helped me a lot. It gave me the stability that I needed. Then he beamed, "I also have a beautiful five month old baby girl. Brittney is my pride and joy."

"As far as the weights, college was the first time I could lift full time. Weights can help you reach your potential. They can definitely help you find that potential. Squats are my favorite leg exercise. They really get your hamstrings."

Jason has a special friend and teammate by the name of Shawn Knight. Shawn should also be a number one draft pick as a defensive lineman. They push each other to great heights.

Coach LaVell Edwards of BYU exclaims, "They just go hard all the time. They just never seem to let up and everything is full speed. It's almost like they compete against each other to see who can work the hardest."

Jason explains, "We both want to be the best. When we go in to lift weights, we are always eyeballing each other. When we run our 40's, we see who's faster. It's friendly but we're both the type of athlete that wants to be on top."

Jason also has a view on steroids. "They're not important to success. It's your mind and mental toughness. No drug can match your heart or your mind's intensity. You can do other things. For example, I watch films at least six hours per week to get an edge on my opponents."

Then somberly Jason answered a question about his family, "Mom watches our games on TV. She's now going to Boise State to get a degree. Dad got to come see three of my games this year in person. My brother lives with a high school coach in Nampa, Idaho. He's a sophomore now and is 6' 1" and 190 lbs. When I start making money from pro football, I'll be there for my family. My family wouldn't take any handouts. It wouldn't be good. But just the same, I'll be there and my own family will never go through what I had to go through."

Jason is a 3.0 student and is a communications major. He doesn't ever miss class, a habit he's had from high school.

Before a game, Jason is very quiet. "I percolate and get ready to explode at game time." BYU cougar line coach, Tom Ramage, was an assistant coach at Utah State 25 years ago when Merlin Olsen received the Outland Trophy. He stated, "They're both extremely intense and make offenses change. They are alike in many ways. They're both giving people and love kids."

Jason made most All-American teams. One pre-season All-American team was declined. Jason told Playboy magazine he was not interested. "I did that for my wife Roxi, myself and for the youth of our church" he explained.

"When they told me about the "Outland" at practice, I could hardly make it through practice without tears welling up in my eyes. The first thing I did was to call my dad (Sid). It was really an emotional moment.

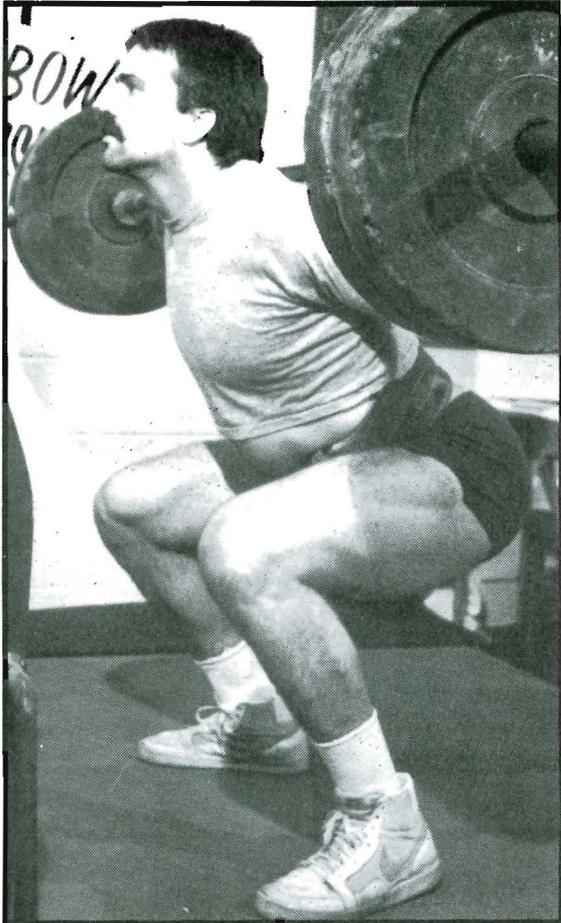
"But, I will never be satisfied with my abilities. Once you become satisfied, you'll no longer be a good player. You lose your hunger."

The challenge has been met and the dream has been fulfilled. We at BFS salute Jason Buck.

"Jason is a great young man. He's hard working and meticulous about the total program. He's very intense and very dedicated. Jason never misses a workout. He's very conscientious. Jason's extremely consistent with intensity. His strength is being able to stay at a very high level of intensity.

You only have to tell Jason once. He's a delight to work with because he has deep feelings for other people. He displays great leadership qualities. In fact, Jason is our strongest leader.

Chuck Stiggins: Strength and Conditioning Coach at Brigham Young University.

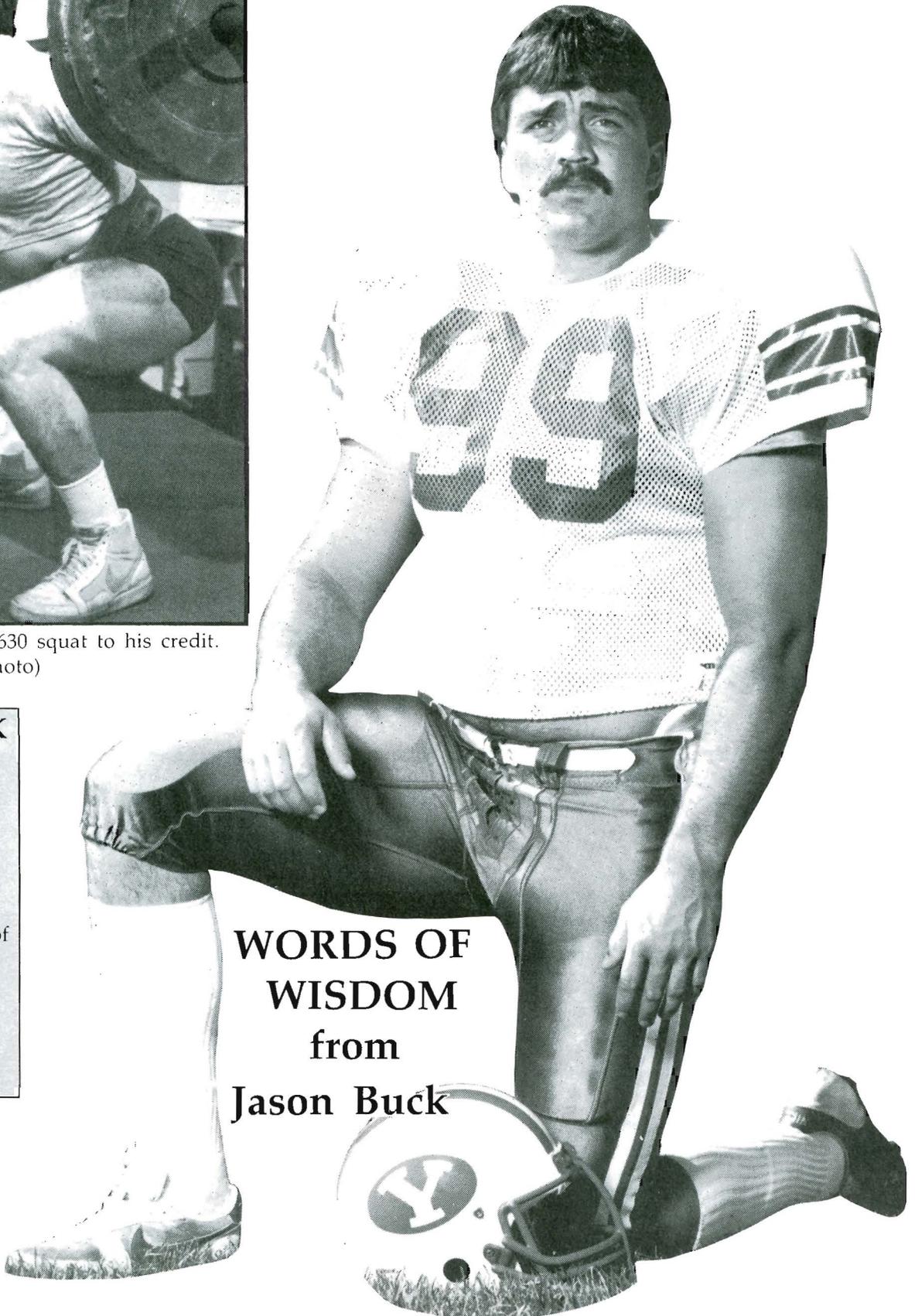


Jason Buck has a 630 squat to his credit.
(Mark Philbrick photo)

JASON BUCK UPDATE

Jason was the number one draft choice of the Cincinnati Bengals. After a long battle of negotiating, Jason signed for \$1.5 million.

Then the strike came and . . .



WORDS OF WISDOM from Jason Buck

"Nothing is Impossible! Don't let people tell you You Can't Achieve. Keep at it, stick to it. What your mind can conceive — you can achieve. Stay away from drugs! It's a terrible burden on society. Drugs destroy families, individuals and friends. Stay Clean!