

BRETT: THE TOUGHEST?

For over a decade a testament to NFL success, Green Bay Packers quarterback **BRETT FAVRE** continues to excel at one of the most high-profile positions in all of sports.

Now, the legendary passer has been recognized by two major publications for one of his signature qualities that fans across the world have come to admire – his toughness.

Men’s Journal listed Favre as the No. 1 “Toughest Guy in America,” this offseason, writing that, “In 12 seasons with the Packers, Favre has known as much pain and glory as any athlete of his generation.” *USA Today* also selected Favre as its toughest athlete, noting that “The physical beatings don’t keep him out. He shrugs off injuries. The mental pressures seem not to faze him as he takes another snap and fires a spiral through Lambeau’s swirling gusts.”

Favre’s 2003 season offered yet another example of why No. 4 jerseys can be seen on fans from Oshkosh to Osaka. Despite a thumb injury that hampered him for much of the season, Favre guided the Packers to the NFC North championship and the divisional playoffs, leading the NFL with 32 touchdown passes and continuing his ascendancy among the game’s all-time passing leaders.

Favre persevered through the death of his father, **IRVIN**, on Sunday, December 21, and was still able to complete 22 of 30 attempts for 399 yards, four touchdowns and no interceptions in leading the Packers to an important 41-7 triumph over the Oakland Raiders the following day before a nationwide audience on *Monday Night Football*.

Perhaps Favre’s toughness, or what Dolphins quarterback **A.J. FEELEY** calls his “blue-collar mentality,” is best exemplified in an unparalleled streak – 189 consecutive starts – the most ever by a quarterback.

“For Brett to be approaching 200 consecutive starts is simply incomprehensible,” says ESPN analyst **RON JAWORSKI**, who himself started 116 games in a row for the Philadelphia Eagles, the second-longest streak all-time. “I know how difficult it is to be out there constantly, despite all the bumps and bruises.

“Brett shattered my record and he just keeps on going and going,” Jaworski says. “That’s a testament to his toughness. There may never have been a tougher player, at any position, than Brett Favre.”

Jaworski’s streak stretched from 1977-84, and during that span he led the Eagles to the playoffs four times, including an All-Star season in 1980 when he sparked Philadelphia to a 12-4 record and a berth in Super Bowl XV.

The following are “Jaws” keys to starting week-in and week-out in the NFL:

- Intestinal fortitude – Ability to deal with the bumps and bruises
- Self-starter – Motivate from within
- Develop amnesia – Put the negative plays behind you

A look at the active and all-time leaders for consecutive quarterback starts:

ACTIVE				ALL-TIME			
Name	Club	Starts	Streak Began	Name	Club	Starts	Years
Brett Favre	GB	189	1992	Brett Favre	GB	189	1992-present
Peyton Manning	Ind	96	1998	Ron Jaworski	Phi	116	1977-84
Aaron Brooks	NO	53	2000	Joe Ferguson	Buf	107	1977-84
Trent Green	KC	48	2001	Peyton Manning	Ind	96	1998-present
Tom Brady	NE	46	2001	Dan Marino	Mia	95	1987-93

In addition to his 200th consecutive start, there are several other milestones Favre will be pursuing this season, not the least of which is the most consecutive seasons with 20 touchdown passes. Favre needs 20 TDs to surpass **DAN MARINO** (10) for the most such years all time.

A look at some of the milestones Brett Favre is approaching in 2004:

BRETT’S FOR THE TAKING

CATEGORY	FAVRE TOTAL	MILESTONE/RECORD
Consecutive QB Starts	189	Needs 11 to become first QB with 200.
Victories	125	Needs one for sole possession of third-most all-time.
3,000-yard seasons	12	Needs one to tie Marino for most all-time.
20 TD pass seasons	10	Needs one to break tie with Marino.
TD passes	346	Needs four to become second player with 350 career.
Season-leader in TD passes	4	Can break four-way tie for most seasons leading in TD passes.
Consecutive games with TD pass	25	Needs TD pass in six games in row for second-longest streak all-time.
Passing Yards	45,646	Needs 3,680 yards to move into third place all-time.
Completions	3,960	Needs 164 for second-most all-time.
Attempts	6,464	Needs 360 for third-most all-time.

This season, NFL fans will be able to read and see more of Favre.

NFL Films is producing a one-hour TV special on his career scheduled to run on FOX in conjunction with the Packers’ December 24 national television game at Minnesota. It will contain never-before-seen footage on Favre’s high school and college days.

And in mid-October, a book entitled “Favre” (below), written by Brett and his mother, **BONITA FAVRE** (with Chris Havel), hits bookstores nationwide. Contributors include Pro Football Hall of Fame quarterback **TERRY BRADSHAW**, longtime NFL writer **PETER KING** and Brett’s wife, **DEANNA FAVRE**.

