

= Lawrence Taylor =

Lawrence Julius Taylor (born February 4 , 1959) , nicknamed " L.T. " , is a Hall of Fame former American football player . Taylor played his entire professional career as a linebacker for the New York Giants (1981 ? 1993) in the National Football League (NFL) . He is one of the greatest players in the history of football , and has been ranked as the greatest defensive player in league history by former players , coaches , media members , and news outlets such as the NFL Network , and Sporting News .

After an All @-@ American career at the University of North Carolina (UNC) (1978 ? 1981) , Taylor was drafted by the Giants as the second overall selection in the 1981 NFL Draft . Although controversy surrounded the selection due to Taylor 's contract demands , the two sides quickly resolved the issue . Taylor won several defensive awards after his rookie season . Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s , Taylor was a disruptive force at outside linebacker , and is credited with changing the pass rushing schemes , offensive line play , and offensive formations used in the NFL . Taylor produced double @-@ digit sacks each season from 1984 through 1990 , including a career high of 20 @.@ 5 in 1986 . He also won a record three Defensive Player of the Year awards and was named the league 's Most Valuable Player (MVP) for his performance during the 1986 season . Taylor is one of only two defensive players in the history of the NFL to have ever won the NFL MVP award . He was named First @-@ team All @-@ Pro in each of his first nine seasons and was a key member of the Giants ' defense , nicknamed " The Big Blue Wrecking Crew " , that led New York to victories in Super Bowls XXI and XXV . During the 1980s , Taylor , fellow linebackers Carl Banks , Gary Reasons , Brad Van Pelt , Brian Kelley , Pepper Johnson , and Hall of Famer Harry Carson gave the Giants linebacking corps a reputation as one of the best in the NFL .

Taylor has lived a controversial lifestyle , during and after his playing career . He admitted to using drugs such as cocaine as early as his second year in the NFL , and was suspended several times by the league for failing drug tests . His drug abuse escalated after his retirement , and he was jailed three times for attempted drug possession . From 1998 to 2009 , Taylor lived a sober , drug @-@ free life . He worked as a color commentator on sporting events after his retirement , and pursued a career as an actor . His personal life came under public scrutiny in 2011 when he pleaded guilty to sexual misconduct involving a 16 @-@ year @-@ old girl .

= = Early life = =

Lawrence Taylor was the second of three sons born to Clarence and Iris Taylor in Williamsburg , Virginia . His father worked as a dispatcher at the Newport News shipyards , while his mother was a schoolteacher . Referred to as Lonnie by his family , Taylor was a mischievous youth . His mother said that " [h] e was a challenging child . Where the other two boys would ask for permission to do stuff , Lonnie ... would just do it , and when you found out about it , he would give you a big story . " Taylor concentrated on baseball as a youth , in which he played the position of catcher , and only began playing football at the advanced age of fifteen . He did not play organized high school football until the following year (eleventh grade) , and was not heavily recruited coming out of high school .

After graduating from Lafayette High School in 1977 , Taylor attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he was a team captain , and wore No. 98 . Originally recruited as a defensive lineman , Taylor switched to linebacker before the 1979 season . He had 16 sacks in his final year there (1980) , and set numerous defensive records . He was recognized as a consensus first @-@ team All @-@ American and the Atlantic Coast Conference Player of the Year in 1980 . While there the coaching staff marveled at his intense , reckless style of play . " As a freshman playing on special teams , he 'd jump a good six or seven feet in the air to block a punt , then land on the back of his neck " , said North Carolina assistant coach Bobby Cale . " He was reckless , just reckless . " UNC later retired Taylor 's jersey .

= = NFL career = =

== 1981 NFL Draft and training camp ==

In the 1981 NFL Draft, Taylor was drafted by the NFL's New York Giants as the 2nd pick overall. In a poll of NFL General Managers (GMs) taken before the draft 26 of the league's 28 GMs said if they had the first selection they would select Taylor. One of the two GMs who said they would not take Taylor was Bum Phillips, who had just been hired as coach and general manager by the New Orleans Saints. As fate would have it for Taylor, the Saints were also the team who had the first pick in the draft. Giants GM George Young predicted before the draft that he would be better than NFL legends such as Dick Butkus: "Taylor is the best college linebacker I've ever seen. Sure, I saw Dick Butkus play. There's no doubt in my mind about Taylor. He's bigger and stronger than Butkus was. On the blitz, he's devastating."

On draft day, Phillips made good on his promise not to draft Taylor and the Saints instead selected Heisman Trophy @-@ winning halfback George Rogers with the first pick, leaving the Giants with the decision of whether to select Taylor. To the raucous approval of the crowd in attendance at the draft (which was held in New York City), the Giants selected him. Privately, Taylor was hesitant about playing for New York as he had hoped to be drafted by the Dallas Cowboys, and was unimpressed with a tour of Giants Stadium he was taken on, after the draft. Publicly, however, he expressed excitement about the opportunity to play in the city. Taylor changed his stance after he was drafted as Harry Carson made a point to reach out to him, and Taylor said he "talked to some players and coaches" and "got things straightened out." One of the factors that the Giants said they considered in selecting Taylor was his solid reputation. "He was the cleanest player in the draft. By that I mean there was no rap on him", said head coach Ray Perkins. "Great potential as a linebacker, a fine young man, free of injuries." Taylor chose to wear number 56 because he was a fan of Cowboys linebacker Thomas Henderson. As it would turn out, Taylor would have the longer and more successful career while Rogers, although successful in his own right with several 1 @, @ 000 @-@ yard rushing seasons and two Pro Bowl selections, was injury @-@ prone and forced to retire following the 1987 season with the Washington Redskins.

Taylor's talent was evident from the start of training camp. Reports came out of the Giants training compound of the exploits of the new phenom. Taylor's teammates took to calling him Superman and joked that his locker should be replaced with a phone booth. Phil Simms, the team's quarterback, said, "on the pass rush, he's an animal. He's either going to run around you or over you. With his quickness, he's full speed after two steps." Taylor made his NFL exhibition debut on August 8, 1981, recording 2 sacks in the Giants' 23 ? 7 win over the Chicago Bears. Before the season word spread around the league about Taylor. Years after facing him in an exhibition game, Pittsburgh Steelers Quarterback Terry Bradshaw recalled, "[h]e dang @-@ near killed me, I just kept saying, 'Who is this guy?' He kept coming from my blind side and just ripped my ribs to pieces."

Taylor developed what has been termed a "love @-@ hate relationship" with Bill Parcells who was the team's defensive coordinator when he was drafted, and would later become their head coach. Parcells often rode players in the hopes of driving them to better performance. Taylor did not appreciate this approach, and early on told Parcells, "I've had enough. You either cut me or trade me but get the fuck off my back." Parcells kept on Taylor, but privately told some veterans, "I like that LT. That motherfucker's got a mean streak."

== Early career : 1981 ? 1985 ==

Taylor made his NFL regular season debut on September 6, 1981, in a 24 ? 10 loss to the Philadelphia Eagles. Aside from incurring a penalty for a late hit on Eagles running back Perry Harrington, Taylor played a nondescript game. In a game versus the St. Louis Cardinals later in the season, Taylor rushed and sacked the passer when he was supposed to drop into coverage. When told by Parcells that was not what he was assigned to do on that play, and that what he did was not in the playbook, Taylor responded "Well, we better put it in on Monday, because that play's a

dandy . " He recorded 9 @. @ 5 sacks in 1981 , and his rookie season is considered one of the best in NFL history . He was named 1981 's NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year and Defensive Player of the Year , making him as of 2013 the only rookie to win an Offensive or Defensive Player of the Year award . Taylor 's arrival helped the Giants defense reduce their points allowed from 425 points in 1980 to 257 in 1981 . They finished the season 9 ? 7 , up five games from the previous season , and advanced to the NFL divisional playoffs , where they lost 38 ? 24 to the eventual Super Bowl champion San Francisco 49ers . The San Francisco win was due partly to a new tactic 49ers coach Bill Walsh used to slow Taylor . Walsh assigned guard John Ayers , the team 's best blocker , to block Taylor and , although Taylor still recorded a sack and three tackles , he was not as effective as normal . In contrast to his on @-@ field success Taylor was already developing a reputation for recklessness off the field ; after nearly getting killed during the season when his speeding resulted in a car crash , Young told the team 's trainer he would be surprised if the linebacker lived past the age of 30 , and the Giants insured Taylor 's life for \$ 2 million .

The 1982 NFL season , which was shortened to nine regular season games by a players strike , included one of the more memorable plays of Taylor 's career . In the nationally televised Thanksgiving Day game against the Detroit Lions , the teams were tied 6 ? 6 early in the fourth quarter , when the Lions drove deep into New York territory . Lions quarterback Gary Danielson dropped back to pass and threw the ball out to his left toward the sidelines . Taylor ran in front of the intended receiver , intercepted the pass , and returned it 97 yards for a touchdown . This play was indicative of Taylor 's unusual combination , even for a linebacker , of power with speed . He was again named Defensive Player of the Year .

After the 1982 season , Perkins became head coach of the University of Alabama and the Giants hired Parcells to replace him . In the coming years this change proved crucial to the Giants and Taylor . Leading up to the 1983 season , Taylor engaged in a training camp holdout that lasted three weeks and ended when he came back to the team under his old contract with three games left in the preseason .

Although Taylor recorded nine sacks and made the All @-@ Pro team for the third consecutive season in 1983 , the Giants struggled . The team went 3 ? 12 ? 1 , and Parcells received heavy criticism from fans and the media . Taylor was forced to play inside linebacker for part of the season , a position which allowed him less pass rushing opportunities , when Carson was injured . Frustrated by the losing , Taylor began acting out by arriving late for meetings , and not participating in conditioning drills in practice . After the season , Taylor was involved in a fight for his services between the Giants and the New Jersey Generals of the United States Football League . Taylor was given a \$ 1 million interest @-@ free , 25 @-@ year loan by Generals owner Donald Trump on December 14 , 1983 , with the provision that he begin playing in the USFL in 1988 . Taylor regretted the decision , and less than a month later attempted to renege . His agent was able to negotiate by meeting with Trump personally and then the Giants which resulted in allowing Taylor to go with the Giants . Taylor got a 6 @-@ year \$ 6 @. @ 55 @-@ million package that also included a \$ 1 million interest @-@ free loan . The main results of these negotiations were threefold : 1) Taylor returned the \$ 1 million to Trump , 2) the Giants paid Trump \$ 750 @, @ 000 over the next five seasons , and 3) the Giants gave Taylor a new six @-@ year , \$ 6 @. @ 2 @-@ million @-@ dollar contract .

The Giants ' record rebounded to 9 ? 7 in 1984 , and Taylor had his fourth All @-@ Pro season . He got off to a quick start , recording four sacks in a September game . In the playoffs the Giants defeated the Los Angeles Rams 16 ? 13 , but lost 21 ? 10 to the eventual champion 49ers .

In contrast to the previous season the Giants headed into the 1985 season with a sense of optimism after their successful 1984 campaign and a 5 ? 0 pre @-@ season record . The Giants went 10 ? 6 , and Taylor spearheaded a defense that led the NFL in sacks with 68 . Taylor had 13 . One of the more memorable plays of his career occurred during this season . On a Monday Night Football game against the Redskins , Taylor 's sack of Redskins quarterback Joe Theismann inadvertently resulted in a compound fracture of Theismann 's right leg . After the sack , a distraught Taylor screamed for paramedics to attend to Theismann . Although this sack ended Theismann 's career , Theismann has never blamed Taylor for the injury . Taylor says he has never seen video of the play and never wants to . During the first round of the playoffs , the Giants defeated the

defending champion 49ers 17 ? 3 , but lost to the eventual champion Chicago Bears in the second round 21 ? 0 .

= = = Mid @-@ career and championships : 1986 ? 1990 = = =

In 1986 Taylor had one of the most successful seasons by a defensive player in the history of the NFL . He recorded a league @-@ leading 20 @.@ 5 sacks and became one of just two defensive players to win the NFL Most Valuable Player award and the only defensive player to be the unanimous selection for MVP . He also was named Defensive Player of the Year for the third time . The Giants finished the season 14 ? 2 and outscored San Francisco and Washington by a combined score of 66 ? 3 in the NFC playoffs . He appeared on the cover of Sports Illustrated alone the week leading up to Super Bowl XXI with a warning from the magazine to the Denver Broncos regarding Taylor . The Giants overcame a slow start in Super Bowl XXI to defeat Denver 39 ? 20 . Taylor made a key touchdown preventing tackle on a goal line play in the first half , stopping Broncos quarterback John Elway as he sprinted out on a rollout .

With the Super Bowl win , Taylor capped off an unprecedented start to his career . After six years , he had been named the NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year Award (1981) , NFL Defensive Player of the Year a record three times (1981 , 1982 , 1986) , First @-@ team All @-@ Pro six times , become the first defensive player in NFL history unanimously voted the league 's MVP (1986) , and led his team to a championship (1986) . After the win , however , Taylor felt let down rather than elated . Taylor said :

When the Super Bowl was over ... Everyone was so excited , but by then I felt deflated . I 'd won every award , had my best season , finally won the Super Bowl . I was on top of the world right ? So what could be next ? Nothing . The thrill is the chase to get to the top . Every day the excitement builds and builds and builds , and then when you 're finally there and the game is over ...

And then , nothing .

The Giants appeared to have a bright future coming off their 1986 championship season as they were one of the younger teams in the league . They struggled the next season however , falling to 6 ? 9 in the strike @-@ shortened 1987 season . Taylor caused strife in the locker room when he broke the picket line after early struggles by the team . He explained his decision by saying " The Giants are losing . And I 'm losing \$ 60 @.@ 000 a week . " He finished the season as the team leader in sacks with 12 in 12 games played , but missed a game due to a hamstring injury , ending his consecutive games played streak at 106 .

The Giants looked to rebound to their championship ways in 1988 but the start of the season was marred by controversy surrounding Taylor . He tested positive for cocaine and was suspended by the league for thirty days , as it was his second violation of the NFL 's substance abuse policy . The first result in 1987 had been kept private and was not known to the public at the time . He was kept away from the press during this period and checked himself into rehab in early September . Taylor 's over @-@ the @-@ edge lifestyle was becoming an increasing concern for fans and team officials . This was especially true given the eventual career paths of talented players like Hollywood Henderson and others whose drug problems derailed their careers . The Giants went 2 ? 2 in the games Taylor missed . When Taylor returned he was his usual dominant self as he led the team in sacks again , with 15 @.@ 5 in 12 games played . The season also contained some of the more memorable moments of Taylor 's career . In a crucial late @-@ season game with playoff implications against the New Orleans Saints , Taylor played through a torn pectoral muscle to record seven tackles , three sacks , and two forced fumbles . Taylor 's presence in the lineup was important as the Giants ' offense was having trouble mounting drives , and was dominated in time of possession . Television cameras repeatedly cut to the sidelines to show him in extreme physical pain as he was being attended to by the Giants staff . Taylor had already developed a reputation for playing through pain ; in a 1983 game against the Eagles the team 's training staff had to hide his helmet to prevent the injured Taylor from returning to the field . Taylor 's shoulder was so injured that he had to wear a harness to keep it in its place . The Giants held on for a 13 ? 12 win , and Parcells later called Taylor 's performance " [t] he greatest game I ever saw . " However , the

Giants narrowly missed the playoffs in 1988 at 10 ? 6 by losing tie @-@ breakers with the Eagles in their division and the Rams for the Wild card .

In 1989 , Taylor recorded 15 sacks . He was forced to play the latter portion of the season with a fractured tibia , suffered in a 34 ? 24 loss to the 49ers in week 12 , which caused him to sit out the second half of several games . Despite his off @-@ the @-@ field problems , Taylor remained popular among his teammates and was voted defensive co @-@ captain along with Carl Banks . The two filled the defensive captain 's spot vacated by the retired Harry Carson . The retirement of the nine @-@ time Pro Bowler Carson , broke up the Giants linebacker corps of Carson , Reasons , Banks , and Taylor , which spearheaded the team 's defense nicknamed the " Big Blue Wrecking Crew " in the 1980s . The Giants went 12 ? 4 , and advanced to the playoffs . In an exciting , down @-@ to @-@ the @-@ wire game , the Rams eliminated the Giants 19 ? 13 in the first round , despite Taylor 's two sacks and one forced fumble .

Taylor held out of training camp before the 1990 season , demanding a new contract with a salary of \$ 2 million per year . Talks dragged into September with neither side budging , and as the season approached Taylor received fines at the rate of \$ 2 @,@ 500 dollars a day . He signed a three @-@ year \$ 5 million contract (making him the highest paid defensive player in the league) just four days before the season opener against the Philadelphia Eagles . Despite sitting out training camp and the preseason , Taylor recorded three sacks and a forced fumble against the Eagles . He finished with 10 @.@ 5 sacks and earned his 10th Pro Bowl in as many years , although the season marked the first time in Taylor 's career that he was not selected to the All @-@ Pro team . The Giants started out 10 ? 0 and finished with a 13 ? 3 record . In the playoffs , the Giants defeated the Bears 31 ? 3 , and faced the rival 49ers in the NFC Championship Game . They won 15 ? 13 , after Taylor recovered a key fumble late in the game to set up Matt Bahr 's game @-@ winning field goal . In Super Bowl XXV , they played the Buffalo Bills and won one of the more entertaining Super Bowls in history , 20 @-@ 19 , after Buffalo 's Scott Norwood missed a potential game @-@ winning field goal as time expired .

= = = Final years and decline : 1991 ? 1993 = = =

Following the 1990 season , Parcells , with whom Taylor had become very close , retired , and the team was taken over by Ray Handley . 1991 marked a steep decline in Taylor 's production . It became the first season in his career in which he failed to make the Pro Bowl squad , after setting a then record by making it in his first ten years in the league . Taylor finished with 7 sacks in 14 games and the Giants defense , while still respectable , was no longer one of the top units in the league .

Taylor rebounded in the early stages of what many thought would be his final season in 1992 . Through close to nine games Taylor was on pace for 10 sacks and the Giants were 5 ? 4 . However , a ruptured Achilles tendon suffered in a game on November 8 , 1992 against Green Bay sidelined him for the final seven games , during which the team went 1 ? 6 . Before the injury Taylor had missed only four games due to injury in his 12 @-@ year career . Throughout the 1992 season , and the ensuing offseason , Taylor was noncommittal about his future , alternately saying he might retire , then later hinting he wanted a longer @-@ term contract .

Taylor returned for the 1993 season enticed by the chance to play with a new coach (Dan Reeves) , and determined not to end his career due to an injury . The Giants had a resurgent season in 1993 . They finished 11 ? 5 , and competed for the top NFC playoff seed . Taylor finished with 6 sacks , and the Giants defense led the NFL in fewest points allowed . They defeated the Vikings 17 ? 10 in the opening round of the playoffs . The next week on January 15 , 1994 in what would be Taylor 's final game , the Giants were beaten 44 ? 3 by the 49ers . As the game came to a conclusion , television cameras drew in close on Taylor who was crying . He announced his retirement at the post @-@ game press conference saying , " I think it 's time for me to retire . I 've done everything I can do . I 've been to Super Bowls . I 've been to playoffs . I 've done things that other people haven 't been able to do in this game before . After 13 years , it 's time for me to go . "

Taylor ended his career with 1 @,@ 088 tackles , 132 @.@ 5 sacks (not counting the 9 @.@ 5 sacks he recorded as a rookie because sacks did not become an official statistic until 1982) , nine

interceptions , 134 return yards , two touchdowns , 33 forced fumbles , 11 fumble recoveries , and 34 fumble return yards .

= = Legacy = =

Taylor is considered one of the best players to ever play in the NFL , and has been ranked as the top defensive player in league history by news outlets , media members , former players and coaches . He has also been described as one of the most " feared " and " intimidating " players in NFL history . Taylor 's explosive speed and power is credited with changing the position of outside linebacker from a " read and react " type of position to a more attacking , aggressive position .

Washington Redskins head coach Joe Gibbs developed the two tight end offense and the position of h @-@ back to prevent Taylor from blitzing into the backfield unhindered . " We had to try in some way have a special game plan just for Lawrence Taylor . Now you didn 't do that very often in this league but I think he 's one person that we learned the lesson the hard way . We lost ball games . " His skills changed the way offensive coaches blocked linebackers . In the late ' 70s and early ' 80s , a blitzing linebacker was picked up by a running back . However , these players were no match for Taylor . The tactic employed by San Francisco 49ers head coach Bill Walsh in the 1982 playoffs , using an offensive guard to block Taylor , was copied around the league . However , this left a hole in pass protection that a blitzing middle linebacker could exploit . Later , Walsh and other coaches began using offensive tackles to block Taylor . Later it became common for offensive linemen to pick up blitzing linebackers . In addition to the changes in offensive schemes Taylor influenced , he also introduced new defensive techniques to the game such as chopping the ball out of the quarterback 's hands rather than tackling him .

= = Drugs and extreme measures = =

In contrast to his success on the football field , Taylor 's personal life has been marred by drug usage and controversy . When Taylor was once asked what he could do that no outside linebacker could , his answer was , " Drink " . However , alcohol abuse was not the largest of his substance abuse problems . After admitting to and testing positive for cocaine in 1987 , he was suspended from football for 30 days in 1988 after failing a second drug test . After his second positive test he gave up drugs for five years as a third positive test would have ended his career . As he approached retirement , however , he looked forward to picking up the habit again , saying in his second autobiography , " I saw blow as the only bright spot in my future . " After his retirement , he began abusing drugs on a regular basis . He went through drug rehab twice in 1995 , only to later be arrested twice over a three @-@ year span for attempting to buy cocaine from undercover police officers . During this period , he lived almost exclusively in his home with white sheets covering his windows and only associated with other drug users . Taylor later said , " I had gotten really bad . I mean my place was almost like a crack house . " In his second autobiography , Taylor admitted that he had begun using drugs as early as his rookie season in the NFL . He has also stated that his first wife , Linda , mother to his three children , once had to come pick him up from a crack house during his playing career .

In a November 2003 interview with Mike Wallace on the television news magazine 60 Minutes , Taylor claimed he hired and sent prostitutes to opponents ' hotel rooms the night before a game in an attempt to tire them out , and that at his peak , he spent thousands of dollars a day on narcotics . He also recounted several other instances of aberrant behavior , including arriving to a team meeting during his playing career in handcuffs after spending a night with some call girls . He said , " A couple of ladies that were trying out some new equipment they had . You know ? And I just happened to , and they just didn 't happen to have the key . " He also said that to beat NFL drug tests , he routinely submitted the urine of his teammates .

= = Post @-@ NFL life = =

In Taylor's final year in the NFL he started a company called All @-@ Pro Products . The company went public at \$ 5 a share , and tripled in value during its first month . The stock price reached \$ 16 @. @ 50 a share , at which point Taylor's stake had an estimated value of over \$ 10 million . The company ceased production shortly thereafter however , and Taylor , who never sold his stock , lost several hundred thousand dollars . He had been defrauded by several members of the penny stock firm Hanover Sterling & Company , who had short sold the company's stock , making it worthless . The Securities and Exchange Commission ruled that two traders had manipulated the price of the stock , which skyrocketed while the company was losing over \$ 900 @, @ 000 . Taylor has also had self @-@ inflicted financial problems ; in 1997 he pleaded guilty to filing a false tax return in 1990 , and in 2000 he was " sentenced to three months of house arrest , five years of probation , and 500 hours of community service for tax evasion . "

After his career ended , Taylor worked in several regular television jobs . He first worked as a football analyst for the now defunct TNT Sunday Night Football . In a one @-@ off show , Taylor also appeared as a wrestler in the World Wrestling Federation , defeating Bam Bam Bigelow in the main event of WrestleMania XI . He also worked as a color commentator on an amateur fighting program entitled Toughman on the FX channel . On September 4 , 1995 , the Giants retired Phil Simms ' jersey during halftime of a game against the Cowboys (Taylor had his number retired the year before) . Simms celebrated the moment by throwing an impromptu ceremonial pass to Taylor . Simms recalled , " [a] ll of a sudden it kind of hit me , I've put Lawrence in a really tough spot ; national TV , he's got dress shoes and a sports jacket on , and he's had a few beers and he's going to run down the field and I'm going to throw him a pass . " Simms motioned for Taylor to run a long pattern and after 30 ? 40 yards threw him the pass . Taylor later said the situation made him more nervous than any play of his career , " I'm saying to myself (as the pass is being thrown) , ' If I drop this pass , I got to run my black ass all the way back to Upper Saddle River because there ain't no way I'm going to be able to stay in that stadium ' . " Taylor caught the pass , however , and the capacity crowd in attendance cheered in approval .

Taylor pursued a career in acting , appearing in the Oliver Stone movie Any Given Sunday where he played a character much like himself . He appeared as himself in the HBO series The Sopranos and the film The Waterboy . He also had a role in the 2000 version of Shaft . Taylor voiced the steroid @-@ riddled , possibly insane former football player B.J. Smith in the video game , Grand Theft Auto : Vice City . The character poked fun at his fearsome , drug @-@ fueled public image . He also added his voice to the video game Blitz : The League and its sequel , which were partially based on his life in the NFL . He also acted in the 2000 Christian film Mercy Streets with Eric Roberts and Stacy Keach , and the 2003 prison movie In Hell with Jean @-@ Claude Van Damme .

In 1999 , when Taylor became eligible for the Pro Football Hall of Fame , there were some concerns that his hard @-@ partying lifestyle and drug abuse would hurt his candidacy . These concerns proved to be ill @-@ founded , however , as he was voted in on the first ballot . His son Lawrence Taylor Jr. gave his introduction speech at the induction ceremony . Taylor's ex @-@ wife , his three children , and his parents were in attendance and during his induction speech Taylor acknowledged them saying , " [t] hank you for putting up with me for all those years . " He also credited former Giants owner Wellington Mara for being supportive of him saying , " [h] e probably cared more about me as a person than he really should have . "

Taylor is currently married to his third wife and resides in Pembroke Pines , Florida . His soul @-@ wrenching admissions to Mike Wallace in 2003 reignited his popularity with the public . Taylor often spoke of his NFL years , which he played with reckless abandon , and the drug @-@ abusing stages of his life as the " L.T. " periods of his life . He described " L.T. " as an adrenaline junkie who lived life on a thrill ride . Taylor said in 2003 that " L. T. died a long time ago , and I don't miss him at all ... all that's left is Lawrence Taylor . "

Taylor re @-@ emerged into the public eye in July 2006 , after appearing on the cover of a Sports Illustrated issue dedicated to former athletes and sport figures . In the magazine , Taylor credited his hobby of golf with helping him get over his previous hard @-@ partying ways and drug filled lifestyle . He co @-@ founded eXfuze , a network marketing company based in West Palm Beach , Florida . Along with former NFL players , such as Eric Dickerson and Seth Joyner , he was a spokesman for

Seven + , the flagship multi @-@ botanical drink produced by the company . His son Brandon recently signed a national letter to play with the Purdue Boilermakers . Taylor was a contestant on the 8th season of Dancing with the Stars , partnered with Edyta ?liwi?ska . He was eliminated in the seventh week on the April 21 , 2009 show .

In 2009 , Taylor started having troubles in his personal life again . On November 8 , he was arrested in Miami @-@ Dade County , Florida for leaving the scene of an accident after striking another vehicle with his Cadillac Escalade . He had already committed the same offense in 1996 when he totaled his Lexus in a one @-@ car accident and left the scene , saying he did not think the law required the reporting of a single driver incident . He was released on a \$ 500 bond , and the other driver later sued him , seeking \$ 15 @,@ 000 . He was arrested six months later for having sex with a 16 @-@ year @-@ old girl at a Holiday Inn located in Montebello , New York . He was charged with felony third @-@ degree statutory rape , for allegedly engaging in sexual intercourse with someone under 17 . He was also charged with third @-@ degree patronization for allegedly paying the underage girl \$ 300 to have sex with him . The girl was represented by celebrity attorney Gloria Allred when Taylor pleaded guilty on March 22 , 2011 and was sentenced to six years probation as part of a plea agreement , in which he pleaded guilty to the misdemeanors of sexual misconduct and patronizing a prostitute . He will also have to register as a low @-@ risk level one sex offender . On October 26 , 2012 , a court rejected the victim 's claims that Taylor assaulted her .

On June 9 , 2016 , Taylor 's wife was arrested for domestic violence in Florida after she threw " an unknown object " and struck Taylor in the back of the head .

= = Career statistics = =

Sources :

* Unofficial statistic (sacks did not become an official statistic until 1982) ; however , this number is stated on Taylor 's Pro Football Hall of Fame bio and is considered to be accurate .

* * League leader

? Including the 9 @.@ 5 Taylor unofficially recorded as a rookie , his total is 142 .

Key to abbreviations

GP = games played

Int = interception

Yds = yards

TD = touchdowns

FR = fumbles recovered