

For the Love of the Gamer

By Jeff Girod, published Dec. 9, 2007

Sports Illustrated recently named Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre its “Sportsman of the Year.”

Other athletes have put up gaudier numbers in 2007, so let’s give Favre a do-over and call it a “lifetime achievement award.”

Favre isn’t just a football player. He’s a cross between John Wayne, Steve McQueen and Bruce Willis in hip pads.

Nobody grows a beard like Brett Favre.

Nobody talks in a Deep South drawl like Brett Favre.

And nobody else can make yellow pants look cool.

Even Brett Favre’s last name defies convention. I mean, how does one get an “r-r-r” sound when the “v-v-v” so obviously should come first?

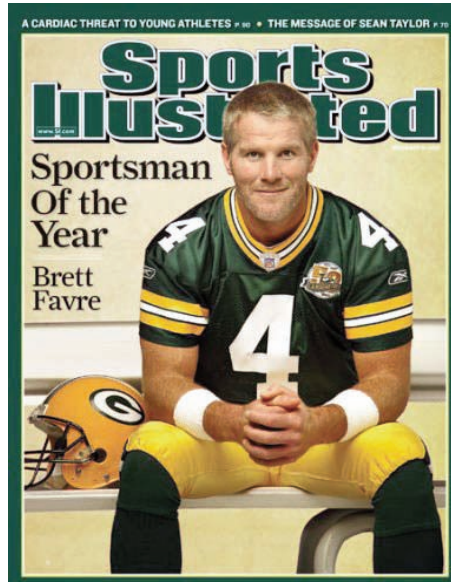
Fellow chucker Tom Brady of the New England Patriots wins more games and dates the type of hotties few men have ever SEEN in person, let alone been shot down by.

Brady is eight years younger than Favre, his team is unstoppable and you could park a riding mower in his chin dimple.

But who would you rather hang out with? Brady, a dandy dressed at his post-game news conferences like a kid going out to build a snowman?

Or Favre, a frayed T-shirted guy’s guy, whose every story starts with “This one time, before I quit drinking...”

If Brady is a Rolex, then Favre is a Timex, who doesn’t always use the proper fork and isn’t



above giving himself a buzz cut.

And most of us choose to root for Favre, because, doggone it, we’re Timexes, too.

Even Favre’s commercials are for things we shop for at Target: heartburn medication and relaxed-fit jeans, which is ironic because Favre rarely looks relaxed on a football field.

He’s always hootin’ and hollerin’, smackin’ 300-pound linemen on the keister and making the kinds of topsy-turvy, side-armed, fall-down, tongue-out throws high school coaches dread.

And yet Favre’s completed enough passes to win a Super Bowl, three MVP awards and the hearts of millions (who rarely throw a perfect spiral either).

Favre is the best of us, which also makes him human. Sure, he ranks second all-time in touch-down passes, but he’s also tops in interceptions.

For a decade and a half we’ve stood by him — through a

stretch in rehab for painkillers, to his wife’s battle back from breast cancer, to playing in a nationally televised game hours after his father died in a car accident. That night, Favre threw for more than 300 yards and four tear-soaked TDs — in one half.

And Brett Favre has stood by us. He hasn’t missed a single solitary coin flip or kickoff since Sept. 20, 1992. That’s more than 15 years without a sick day!

Just last season, the Packers missed the playoffs and anyone worth his starched blazer urged Favre to hang it up.

“He’s too old,” they said.

“He’ll get hurt,” they said.

“Who does he think he is?” they said.

One season later, he’s Sportsman of the Year.