

ERIC “BUTTERBEAN” ESCH

ERIC WAS BORN ON AUGUST 3, 1966, IN AMERICUS, GEORGIA, TO KURTIS AND DOROTHY

Esch. He spent his early childhood in St. Johns, Michigan. During this time his parents were involved in a horrific car accident, from which his mother eventually died. Beginning his 6th grade year, his father and stepmother moved their family to Curry, Alabama, where his father owned the Curry Tackle Box. Eric played football at Curry for a couple of years, but found he liked drag racing better.

At the age of 20, he began his boxing career when he agreed to enter a tough man competition in Jasper. He went on to become the 18 - Time World Heavyweight Tough Man Champion and then turned professional. His first pro-fight was in Birmingham and his second was on National TV, which was unheard of at the time. He received his nickname, Butterbean, when he had to go on a diet of chicken and butterbeans to lose down to the 400 pound weight limit. He became known as the “King of the Rounder.” He fought against former Heavyweight Champion of the World, Larry Holmes, but lost in a controversial decision. He has held World Championships in WAA, IBF, IBA, WBF, MMA, and Professional Wrestling. He has fought in approximately 300 total fights over his career. He has fought in China, Japan, USA, Africa, England, Canada, Mexico, and Australia making him arguably the best known and most recognizable athlete in the world. He was the star of the reality TV show “Big Law” on the Discovery Channel. He has appeared in three movies, numerous video games and a number of cartoons. He also appeared on Jay Leno’s “Tonight Show” more times than any other athlete.

Eric currently owns Mr. Bean’s Restaurant in Jasper and makes custom ink pens and safety razors in his spare time. He has been married to his high school sweetheart, Libby Gaskin, for 35 years. He has three children: Brandon, Caleb and Grace and nine grandchildren: Ava, Drake, Bryant, Braden, Alaina, Connor, Mayci, Valerie, and Lincoln.

