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Vicksburg man a 'Biggest Loser' contestant

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The season premier of The Biggest Loser airs tonight on NBC, and Mississippi will be able to root for one of its own.

Patrick House, 28, of Vicksburg, is one of 21 contestants on season 10 of the popular weight-loss show.

House, a former salesman, has been big most of his life, he says, but a back injury he suffered as an offensive lineman for Delta State University sidelined him and the pounds packed on.

"I had gotten accustomed to eating lots of carbs," says House. For six months after the injury, he was unable to do any exercise.

"It was so painful to see him struggle. To see how bad his habits were," says his brother, Donnie House, 33.

Patrick married in 2005 and is now the father of two boys ages 4 and 2. "Working out fell to the wayside," he says. "My priority was working to take care of my family, not myself."

He started the show weighing 400 pounds. This was his second attempt at The Biggest Loser. He and his mother made it to the finals in 2005 for the couples-themed season but were cut.

Patrick isn't at liberty to reveal how long he lasted on this year's show or how much weight he's lost, but says it is significant.

"He's a different person," says his wife, Bradley House. "It was kind of scary when I saw him. I've never seen him this size before."

When they met, Patrick was 315 pounds. This is the first time Bradley has seen her husband's cheek and collar bones.

"Patrick has always been a positive person. Now he's even happier," she says, noting he now has energy

to play with the kids.

The couple figured he had health problems, but results from a medical assessment for contestants revealed things were worse than they thought. Patrick was prediabetic, had high blood pressure, high cholesterol, sleep apnea and plaque was found in his carotid artery.

Filming began at the end of May.

"It was really tough. Bob (Harper) and Jillian (Michaels) — they have a way to get the most out of everybody they train. We were pushed to the max everyday," he says.

Patrick took his father-in-law's advice for a strategy to stay on the show as long as possible — " 'Fly under the radar and keep your nose clean,' I did that."

Family support was tremendous during his time away.

Phone calls weren't allowed, but screened letters were.

Donnie sent letters about once a week from his home in the Grand Cayman Islands, and thinks their

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mom, who lives in Brandon where they grew up, sent letters about every other day.

Patrick is back home now in Vicksburg and works out six days a week, counting calories, eating and cooking healthy meals.

Last Wednesday, Donnie joined him during his workout of swimming, weight lifting and running (indoors and outdoors).

"He outlasted me on everything. First time in my life he's done that," Donnie says. "To see how far he's made it is incredible. I'm so extremely proud of him."

Knowing her husband would return home with an enlightened approach to his health, Bradley began cooking and eating differently while he was away and lost 40 pounds.

Now they workout together during evening spinning and step aerobics classes as well as running.

Despite who is eliminated from the show, all contestants are in the running for the \$250,000 prize, which will be presented at the live grand finale Dec. 14.

Patrick is eager to share what he's learned with all of Mississippi.

"We have a knack for coming in last. I didn't want that," he says. "No matter what happens, I'm a winner already. I won my life back with my family."

To comment on this story, call Shanderia K. Posey at (601) 961-7264.



Patrick House (left) of Vicksburg is shown with his brother Donnie House. Patrick will compete on the new season of The Biggest Loser, which premieres tonight on NBC. (Special to The Clarion-Ledger)

On tv

The Biggest Loser airs from 7-9 tonight on NBC channels.

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