



Israel Idonije at the InterContinental Chicago's pool. The space has a sports history: Johnny Weissmuller trained here on his way to winning five Olympic gold medals, before going on to star in a dozen *Tarzan* films in the 1930s.

Go Big

Chicago Bear Israel Idonije suits up with a sharp new look from Balani Custom Clothiers.

| By Matt Lee | Photography by Anthony Tablier |

When you meet him, two things quickly become apparent about Chicago Bears defensive end Israel Idonije: He's a very nice man, and he has arms and legs the size of your torso. To craft the perfect gameday suit for Idonije, we visited the Loop's Balani Custom Clothiers (balanicustom.com), where second-generation owner Sonny Balani and consultant Ricardo Bucio took the big man through their custom process. First, spend some time with their iPad lookbook to get a feel for the aesthetic. Then pow-wow with

the staff, who will casually find out about what you're looking for in a suit, your lifestyle, job and wardrobe plans. After more than 50 measurements and countless decisions regarding fabric, button-hole threading and similar details, you're off and running. "We have a tailored, fitted look," says Balani. "These days a lot of people work out, take care of themselves and want a slimmer fit."

That certainly goes for Izzy, who planned on wearing his new suit to the Bears international game in London. Chicagoans are also likely to see it at one of the many events he throws for his Israel Idonije Foundation, which focuses particularly on disadvantaged kids. "I grew up with missionary parents and was taught that no matter where you are in life you can do something to help people," he says. But even when you're doing good deeds, it doesn't hurt to look great. "It's trim, cut perfectly, very comfortable," says Idonije of his new look. "I'm ready to handle some business!" ■