



William Ford Reed Jr.

July 12, 1943 - February 5, 2022

William Ford Reed, Jr, 78, of Louisville, KY, passed away on Saturday, February 5, 2022. Most readers of these pages knew him as a sportswriter, and a remarkable one at that. He was able to weave words together into stories that captured the agonizing, the beautiful, and the profoundly human moments of all sports, but especially his great loves of horse racing, college basketball, and baseball. Readers know of his numerous awards and accolades. He was proud of his various Hall of Fame memberships, his two Eclipse Awards, his 12 Sports Illustrated cover stories, and his books. He was exceedingly proud of his Kentucky Derby attendance, and we regularly tested his extensive Derby knowledge. The one of us who had the audacity to graduate from college on Derby weekend was reminded of this often. A particularly special Derby was in 2020, when his grandchildren re-enacted the call to the post, the singing of “My Old Kentucky Home” (Caroline), and the race itself around the circle in front of his house. The Hulkinator (Shep) won, with Sugar (Lucy) and My Man Sam (Sam) coming in second.

One of his greatest gifts to us were his long friendships. For all of you, some of whom are no longer with us, you blessed him and us with your support, your banter, your laughter, and your ability to love him even when you disagreed. To those who attended even one of a million sporting events with him, who collaborated with him on projects, who were members of St. Frances of Rome or Lost and Found meetings, you enriched his life immensely. You have our heartfelt gratitude.

Billy is survived by two daughters, Amy and Susan, a son-in-law, Rob, and four grandchildren, Caroline, Lucy, Shephard, and Sam, two sisters, Terry and Judy, and beloved cousins. Our dad loved Kentucky, he loved watching the Louisville Bats and the Cincinnati Reds, he loved basketball in this state (all-inclusively), he loved horse racing, and he loved playing golf (although it was eternally frustrating). He loved cheeseburgers and chocolate milkshakes (no whipped cream); Ale-8; Pat’s Steakhouse; and popsicles. He loved 1950s and 1960s rock-and-roll, and books and movies of all kinds. He also loved attending his grandchildren’s every performance and sporting event, holiday or spring concert, and was a fixture at every Grandparents Day at school. We will forever be

thankful that he was able to be a part of our children's lives because he found a path to recovery in 2006. He was larger than life, and will be missed every day.

In lieu of flowers, expressions of condolence may be made to The Healing Place, 1020 W. Market Street, Louisville, KY, 40202 or to The Backside Learning Center, 3131 S. 2nd St., #389, Louisville, KY 40208. A celebration of life will be held at a later date. Arrangements under the direction of Pearson's, "Where Louisville Goes To Remember."

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

APR **23**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Kentucky Derby Museum
704 Central Avenue
Louisville, KY 40208

Remembrances

APR **23**. 6:00 PM (ET)

Kentucky Derby Museum
704 Central Avenue
Louisville, KY 40208

Tribute Wall

GK

“ *My parents' backyard adjoined Billy's maternal grandparents' backyard in Mt. Sterling. Billy and I were the same age and played together until his family moved to Louisville. I have many happy memories of those days. My sincere sympathy to all family members and friends.*



Gloria Morris Kovacic - February 06 at 03:07 PM

DM

“ *Billie's grandmother and my grandmother lived next door to each other in Mt Sterling, Ky. We played together when we were staying with our grandmothers as young boys. Later on I followed Billie to Transylvania University where we remained as friends. My condolences to his entire family!! David McFadden.*

David McFadden - February 06 at 02:00 PM