



Donald Eugene Ratliff

July 17, 1950 - April 26, 2023

Don was born in Baltimore, Maryland. He attended John Handley High School in Winchester, Virginia where he participated in honors chorus and lettered in 3 sports, football, basketball, and track before attending the University of Maryland in College Park. At Maryland he played wide receiver and defensive end for the Maryland Terrapins football team. He is ranked in the ACC pass reception leaders in 1972.

After Maryland, Don was a wide receiver and defensive end who played four seasons for the Florida Blazers, Detroit Wheels, and Philadelphia Bell of the World Football League. He was drafted in the NFL by the New England Patriots and then played for the Philadelphia Eagles. He completed his football career with the BC Lions in the Canadian Football League.

After his football career Ratliff was a businessman. He was president of Stackig Advertising in Washington, DC and spent 11 years with Earl Palmer Brown Advertising in Bethesda, Maryland. He also served on the Washington Ad Club board of directors and was awarded the Crystal Prism Award. In 1991 he moved to Orlando where he became president of Gouchenour Advertising. He later founded Synergy Sports Marketing which marketed events like The Arnold Palmer Golf Academy, Disney Golf Classic, NFLPA Super Bowl Tournament among others. He was elected president of the Orlando Advertising Federation in 1996.

Don was president of the Orlando chapter of NFLPA Former players. He

helped raise money for various charities including Dr Phillips High School Sports Programs, Shepherds Hope, Special Olympics and St Judes. He was a single parent who raised a beautiful daughter Stephanie. She is carrying his grandchild due in November.

Surviving family members include:

Daughter: Stephanie Ratliff, Brother: Bill Ratliff, Sister: Debbie Ratliff Rogers
Sister-in-law: Donna Ratliff, Brother-in-Law: John Rogers, Cousins: Sandi Ratliff Rose and Rich Rose, Nieces: Christine Ratliff Lawley, Mary Caroline Rogers Parker, Nephews: Scott Ratliff, Brian Rogers, Brett Rogers, Bradley Rogers.

Grandbaby Ratliff – due in November.

Don's advice to his daughter no matter what she was involved in was "Never Quit." The last year of his life he was challenged with extreme physical difficulties and up to his last day earth, he never quit.

The family is holding a private memorial celebration of life. In lieu of flowers contributions in memory of Don can be made to: Shepherd's Hope in Orlando, St Judes Children's Hospital and Special Olympics.

Tribute Wall

LS

“ Unfortunately, just found out about Don. We shared some fond memories. I reach out to the Ratliff family. Lyle Stuart a.k.a. Stu

Lyle Stuart - August 14, 2023 at 06:12 PM

KF

“ Sending love to the Ratliff's. Hoping you find comfort in the great memories.

Karen Fitzgerald - May 18, 2023 at 10:10 PM

TP

“ Don Ratliff as our Maryland football team co-captain in 1972 was a fine player but an even better leader. This was our 5-5-1 turn around year under Coach Jerry Claiborne soon to yield great success. Don had endured some tough years prior and he was a remarkable example of leadership, grit, tenacity, and the voice of maturity to all of us as we rebuilt the Terps. Don's teammates and coaches respected him and one can only imagine what a great life this then promising man had after graduating. May God rest his soul. John 3:16

Thom Park, Ph.D. Graduate Assistant 1972 Maryland team

Thom Park, Ph.D. - May 17, 2023 at 04:48 PM

BS

“ My condolences to Don's family. I knew and appreciated Don as a friend and teammate. He was a team leader during a challenging transition in our collegiate football program.

Bob Smith - May 17, 2023 at 06:01 AM

RK

“ To Bill and Debbie, Don and I grew up together, played on Handley's greatest Team, and as Don did often formed a lifetime bond. I never went to Orlando without taking him out to Dinner and Don picked the place and it was always first class! He got us on Palmer's Bay Hill many times even when he was hurting from the accident. He was my friend and after his stroke no one could reach him, but he surprised me with a call at work! He remembered how to get in touch with me in his altered state of mind which meant a lot to me The conversation was Unusual but it was still Rat! When Don was in charge of something his favorite expression was "You're Handled!!!" I sincerely believe that God looked down on Don and saw his condition and said "You're Handled!". He will be missed but memories of him will always make me smile! Love to you all. Rick Kern

Rick Kern - May 16, 2023 at 10:51 AM

JG

I was fortunate to have been a coworker of Don's in the late 1970's. Since we lived near each other and shared out love of sports, we had a great friendship. We played co-ed softball on our ad agency's team, and I could always count on Don to help us win. Missed him when he moved. RIP

Judy Greene - October 22, 2023 at 03:22 PM

CD

“ Knew Don from when we were teenagers in Winchester, Va. & followed his career @ Maryland & the Pros & his Professional career in Orlando. Wonderful guy & always had a good time with Don. Will never forget Don Ratliff!

clarke Davis - May 16, 2023 at 10:47 AM

MH

“ Don was a great high school and college football teammate and Phi Delta Theta fraternity brother .I will always cherish the memories of our times together in Winchester,College Park and Orlando.His classic line was ‘YOUR HANDLED’....when it was his trip/event.....and you were! And YES.... as in his obituary....there was NO QUIT. In ‘RAT’.....he ran full throttle...Will miss you big GUY”.....

monte hinkle - May 15, 2023 at 10:16 PM

BR

“ Don was a great friend. Always enjoyed our time hanging out and discussing our Eagles vs Steelers rivalry. Had to listen for a year after the Eagles won the superbowl! Lol.
Will miss you buddy.
Bill Riehl
Steeler for life.

Bill Riehl - May 15, 2023 at 09:52 AM