



Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial



JOHNNY "RAY" FERGUSON

September 16, 1950 - February 1, 2004
Stillwater High School Class of 1969

13th Annual Memorial Induction Ceremony
October 4, 2008

Ray Ferguson was born in Dallas, Texas, and moved to Stillwater around the year 1956. Born to Earl and Jewell Ferguson of Stillwater, he left us in the year 2004. His memory and influence is one of great joy and appreciation.

Ray spread joy to whomever he touched and had an infectious attitude and a wonderful spirit that was felt by all who knew him. It is a feeling of celebration when thinking about Ray and what he meant to those who knew him.

Ray was simply a gifted athlete. It was in wrestling that he excelled and it was the sport he loved. Success followed him wherever he went and this sport was tailor made for him. He combined strength with skill and a determination to be successful in his sport. Ray wrestled during a time that Stillwater was a dynasty in high school wrestling. Three team state championships were the fruits of his and others work. Ray completed his senior year with a 16-1 record. Ray, David Domnick and David Turner were the cornerstones of this great team of 1969.

A great influence on Ray was his coach Tommy Chesbro. Ray admired and appreciated the coaching style of Coach Chesbro and flourished under his program. Under Chesbro Ray won many tournaments and was even named outstanding wrestler in several of them. Ray was a formidable opponent and his combination of skills allowed Ray to succeed in the great sport of amateur wrestling.

Ray's sense of humor is legendary. He loved to laugh and his laugh brought laughter to others around him. It was his ability to make people comfortable around him and elevate the spirit of others that I remember vividly. I cannot recall anyone who did not get along with Ray or held a grudge against him. It was simply not in his nature to cause hard feelings but rather it was his natural ability to bring out the best in others that is his legend.

Ray was a great outdoorsman. He loved hunting and fishing and spent countless hours enjoying God's Earth. He would rise early in the mornings to fish or hunt and was a true marksman. His love for wildlife was something that I will never forget. Ray raised many animals including raccoons, coyotes and he even raised many Red Tailed Hawks. Ray trained at least a dozen hawks until they were old enough to fly away and be on their own. Occasionally we would see one return and he truly enjoyed being in touch with nature.

Ray was a great representative of a Pioneer. He was a good promotion for our great high school and lived life to the fullest. He loved Stillwater and was a member of a local church and helped with or was a member of other institutions in our area. Ray is survived by his parents of Stillwater, brother Randy of Fort Worth and Danny of Stillwater.

On this day, a celebration is in order for Johnny Ray Ferguson. It is both a great joy to reflect back on Ray and a sorrow that he is no longer with us. All is OK as I remember him saying "we will meet again".

Presenter

Tim Rains

Stillwater High School Class of 1969