

Jeffrey C. Taylor(1956 - 2014)

Jeffrey C. Taylor

"Jeff"

AGE: 58 • Newark

Delaware sports luminary and long-time resident of Newark, Delaware, Jeffrey C. Taylor, 58, passed away at home on November 17, 2014, surrounded by his loving family. Jeff courageously battled cancer for eighteen months with the same determination that earned him numerous awards and distinctions for sports. His life-long participation in a number of sports began as a youth and culminated in a career in professional baseball. Taylor is survived by his beloved wife of 26 years, Jean-Marie; mother Joan C. Taylor; daughter Laura E. Taylor and wife Amy O'Brien; twin brother Steve Taylor and wife Carol; sister Deborah Taylor Kinderman; sister Carol Netta and husband John; brother Rob Taylor and wife Mari of Texas; 15 nieces and nephews; and 27 great nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his father Robert B. Taylor. Family members fondly remember Jeff as a man with a great sense of humor and a ready smile who enjoyed a large circle of friends and easily engaged even complete strangers. He loved bringing his many friends together for special events such as high school friends get-togethers and neighbor cul-de-sac parties. A favorite vacation destination was the Caribbean with his devoted wife, Jean-Marie. He loved their frequent escapes to the tropical paradise and the snorkeling that went with it. Through the years, Jeff treasured the time he spent with his only daughter, Laura, and also looked forward to family parties where he became "Uncle Pops" and had the opportunity to hang out with nieces and nephews who reciprocated his affection. Although Jeff was a sports hero most of his life, he also had a soft side which manifested itself in the kindness with which he treated everyone and all living things. During Jeff's adult life he enjoyed the company of "man's best friend", his beloved dogs. It was at Newark High School where he lettered in three sports that the sporting world began to take serious notice of Jeff's athletic abilities. He was named the Outstanding Athlete of the graduating class of 1974 and was catcher and captain of the school's State Champion Baseball Team. During his senior year football season, he was named an All-State Quarterback and the following summer led the Delaware Gold All-Star team to victory after tossing three touchdown passes—a Blue and Gold Game record that still stands today. Jeff continued his athletic career at the University of Delaware where he earned a degree in physical education and played both football and baseball before focusing on only baseball after his sophomore year. Turning in a combined 13-5 pitching record for his sophomore and senior years, he spent his junior year behind the plate as a catcher. His work there was so impressive that the Texas Rangers drafted him in the 28th round as a catcher, but he chose pitching instead and returned to Delaware and the pitching mound for his senior year. He compiled an 8-4 record for the season and then led the Blue Hens to the ECC Tournament Championship before being drafted by the New York Yankees in the 9th round. After playing five years of professional baseball and compiling a 26-11 pitching record, his playing career ended in 1982 due to an elbow injury. With no desire to retire from baseball, Jeff returned to the University of Delaware as a graduate assistant and assistant coach for the baseball team. After completing a graduate degree, he accepted a head coaching position at Wilmington College where in only one year he guided the team to the District 19 Championship and missed an invitation to the College World Series by only one win. In 1987, Jeff began a scouting career with the New York Yankees as Scouting Supervisor for the Mid-Atlantic States, eventually rising to the rank of National Scouting Cross Checker. He spent 27 years scouting for the Yankees, Texas Rangers, Toronto Blue Jays, and Baltimore Orioles. During the past eight years, he has worked for the Cincinnati Reds, retiring this fall as Major League Special Assistant to the General Manager of the Reds. Before his retirement, the baseball world publicly recognized his many college and career accomplishments with elections to the Delaware Baseball Hall of Fame in 2010 and the Mid-Atlantic Scouting Association Hall of Fame in 2013. Jeff's legacy is one of hard work, courage and determination, and even as he battled terminal cancer, he created a bucket list and proceeded to accomplish all the goals on it. His last and probably most impressive undertaking occurred only three weeks before his death. With family and friends, he traveled to Ponte Vedra, Florida, home of TCP Sawgrass, to try his skill on one of the most intimidating holes in golf, the infamous island green at the 17th hole. Making par with 3 strokes, he did what few golfers have been able to do. Indeed, Jeff conquered much more than the 17th hole with those last putts. He showed that one can set high goals for himself and accomplish them if he has enough will power and personal discipline. His family, friends, and professional associates will certainly miss Jeff, but his legacy will endure for all to cherish. A viewing will be held at the Doherty Funeral Home, 3200 Limestone Road Wilmington, DE 19808, on Friday, November 21, from 5-7:30 p.m., and funeral services will be Saturday, November 22, at 10:00 a.m. at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 500 West Chestnut Hill Road, Newark. Interment will follow in the Ebenezer United Methodist Church Cemetery, 525 Polly Drummond Hill Road, Newark.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the Delaware SPCA (DESPCA.org/donate) or the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center (gifts.MDAnderson.org).

To send condolences, visit:

www.dohertyfh.com

302-999-8277

Funeral Home

Doherty Funeral Homes - Pike Creek

3200 Limestone Road Wilmington, DE 19808
(302) 999-8277

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