



Walter Benjamin "Billy" Munk Jr.

June 29, 1958 - June 23, 2019

The unexpected passing of my brother still has me in a shocked state of mind.... I just wanna say for myself , Our Entire Family , Friends and kids that you coached In Clifton, Passaic , St. Mary's , Teaneck, Barringer , Clifton Boys and Girls Club Hall Of Fame , Eastside "Paterson and Last The Paterson Kennedy Knights ...in your words Coach Munk " THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES " along with Rodney Hampton and Victor Cruz training Camps. Special Education teacher as well ... You touched Thousands of Life's near and far. A Husband , Idol , Mentor , Teacher and a Great High School Football and Basketball Coach ... Last a Great Football running back himself..... We are truly going to miss you Wally Moons and me most of all because, I never got a chance to tell you I was your BIGGEST FAN ????

Way to young and I know you would want me to keep pressing on, but it's gonna be hard and difficult without you Billy ... Rest In Peace my Only Brother ... Sleep in Peace I Love You Munkster ??????????????

love Greg

John F. Kennedy's Walter Munk Jr. Remembered as Both Coach And Mentor

PATERSON, NJ - John F. Kennedy High School (JFK) seniors Jayson Triunfer and Jahmall Readus both have football on their minds. The same is the case for junior Steven Rojas, though the fall gridiron season is still months away.

Triunfer has accepted a full-ride athletic scholarship to play for Fort Scott Community College, in Kansas. Readus was awarded a partial scholarship and will take the field for New Jersey's Caldwell University. Rojas is looking forward to playing middle linebacker for Kennedy Head Coach Ron Jackson and building upon last fall's state playoff qualifying squad.

The day before graduation, the trio all had one thing in common. Each were mourning the loss of their former coach, Walter Munk.

Last week, the well-respected instructor and mentor unexpectedly passed away following a surgery.

The three sat down with TAPinto Paterson and elaborated on the tremendous impact Coach Munk, had made on their lives, both on the field and off.

Munk's coaching career spanned three decades, including stops at Paterson Catholic, St. Mary's, Passaic, and Clifton before taking on the top job as the head coach of JFK's freshman squad in 2014.

It wasn't just the play on the field that mattered to him, the three standout athletes said. Coach Munk was equally as concerned about the young men's academic ventures as he was their football exploits.

Coach Munk was my coach in 9th grade," Triunfer stated. "He was very hard working. He'd do anything for us kids. He always got along with everybody. He was very positive. He helped me prepare not only for football but for life."

The 18-year old credited the early influence of Coach Munk's work ethic as inspirational in helping him develop from a player who was just beginning to

learn the game to earning a starting position at both defensive and offensive tackle for the Knights' varsity. Triunfer can now bench press a whopping 385 pounds and has been contacted by several universities, including the University of Nebraska, to possibly continue his football career after junior college, he said.

"Usually, on football teams, the varsity practices run later than those of the 9th grade team," Triunfer said. "But our freshmen year the varsity usually went to the locker room before we did. But the hard work really paid off. We had a 9-2 record that season."

"I remember that Coach Munk used to call me 'The Godfather', Triunfer continued. "He said that because I was the oldest looking guy on the team. But, he also helped me all through high school. He helped me weigh the options of which colleges I should attend."

Readus played tight-end and middle-linebacker for the Knights this past season. He and Triunfer were 9th grade teammates. The 19-year old said he especially remembered that Coach Munk would always go the extra mile for his players.

"Coach Munk always took time to talk with you," Readus recounted. "If he felt there was something wrong, or something was bothering somebody, he would take them aside and talk it over. He was always there. You could depend on him."

Readus said that at times if a player needed reprimand, Coach Munk would not hesitate to go to their classroom, call them out, and, "tell them to shape up and do better."

“We played our freshmen games on Saturday mornings,” Readus reminisced. “Every Friday night, after practice, Coach Munk would serve us a dinner in the locker room. There were always sandwiches, pasta, baked chicken, and more. Also, on Saturday mornings, I would roll out of bed just in time for my mom to drive me to school to get ready to play. Coach Munk would always have bagels and cereal ready for us on game day.”

Rojas recalled Coach Munk’s regular protocol with not just athletes but with all students.

“Coach was always in the hallways checking up on people, even if they weren’t football players,” the soon-to-be senior said. “He would check up on your grades and make sure you were doing okay.”

Rojas said that due to his freshman mentor’s guidance he chose to focus on football over the favorite sport of his native country, the Dominican Republic.

“If it wasn’t for Coach Munk’s encouragement and inspiration to me that year to keep going, I don’t think I would be playing now.” Rojas explained. “Now I am working hard toward playing football in college.”

Rojas said that Coach Munk made one final gesture of bonding.

“Coach Jackson was away coaching for the North-South game,” Rojas said. “Coach Munk was in charge of overseeing the players during weight lifting. Before everyone left, he told us he was having surgery. We all wished him well as we left.”

Jackson said that he and his staff, as well as the entire JFK family, were deeply saddened by the loss of their friend.

“Coach Munk was a very loyal coach to the staff, to the kids, and to the school community,” Jackson stated. “I could count on him 100%. He was always dependable.”

Jackson said that Munk also helped coach the varsity on game days by providing updates from the scorer’s booth on defensive alignments of opposing teams and assisted with other duties, as well.

“This is a loss for everyone,” Jackson concluded.

“Coach Munk was dedicated to making the lives of our young folks better. He was also just a good dude,” In a Paterson Recreation Director Benjie Wimberly wrote partially in a Facebook post. “The last time I saw him, he was a volunteer coach at the Victor Cruz Football Camp. Coach Munk will be missed and his impact will be everlasting.”

The beloved role model also worked in the Paterson Public Schools Special Education Department as a student-aide at JFK. He also coached at Barringer Newark High School and Teaneck High School.

“Coach Munk was a one-on-one with a young man who is physically and mentally challenged,” Joe Feoli, team leader of Kennedy’s West Side Café, said. “We have two classes of 20 students each who we work with here in the culinary program to provide them with skills for life after high school. I worked with Coach Munk for two years. He got along really well with all of the students and would always go out of his way to help others. He always had a smile on his face.”

Feoli said that returning to school was difficult for the young people.

“Many of the students were crying,” Feoli said. “They were all very sad. We

had a long discussion. What helped was that we had a time of remembering and expressing the good and pleasant memories about Coach Munk. That really helped the students.”

“My sincerest condolences to the family and friends of Coach Munk and the JFK family,” Zatiti Moody, Principal of Paterson’s Great Falls Academy, stated. “We lost a true soldier in Brother Munk. He was truly dedicated to coaching and a good man with a great spirit for helping young men develop. This is a big loss for the entire county. God Bless you all!! RIP Coach Munk.”

Munk was also a dedicated member of the Roger Williams Baptist Church, in Passaic. He regularly volunteered for many events and ministries there as well as assisting Pastor William Davison.

He is survived by

His wife

Tanya Allen Munk Clifton

His mother

Johnnie Mae Munk Clifton

1 Brother

Greg Munk Clifton

5 sisters

Roxanne Mc Allister Pontiac, Mich

Sheila Wesby Clifton

Emma Winston Clifton

Linda Munk Felder Clifton

Sherri Munk Clifton

2 brothers in law

Keith Allen

Dennis Wesby

2 sisters in law

Stephanie Munk

Sharon Abuabasa

Predeceased by

his father

Walter Munk, Sr. 1999

2 sisters

Addie Joe Purdue May 1999

Jean Munk 2002

Father in law Rev. Ivey Allen 2018

Mother in law Martha Allen 2007

Tribute Wall



“ *Walter Benjamin "Billy" Munk Jr.*

November 27, 2022 at 05:57 PM

EW

“ To my LITTLE BROTHER BILLY, #2First I would like to say that Your Entire Family misses you so so much. I sit and I have read all of the comments that people have written about you, but they don't know you like we knew you. From the time when you were my little brother, they all talked about your last 30 years but not before. Let me tell you about My Brother Billy, he was a GENTLE GIANT he always had a heart of GOLD, and ooh how he loved his family. From the time when he was 3 or 4 football was his passion my mother couldn't pry the football away from him, he ate with it slept with it all his life, he didn't pick football up in his later years that was the love of his life. He had all sisters at the time and when he got a football one Christmas at 4 yrs old , We knew then that he was going to live his life for football. Billy was a giving person always wanted to make other people happy and that's what he did best. We remember him at Christmas time always buying all of his students gifts especially the ones who were less fortunate we would help him wrap each and everyone. He also would step up and help the ones with no fathers as well. Billy loved our Mother to the moon and back. No matter what, when, where or how he would do whatever she asked. Every time he'd walk in the room it would light up with such joy. Billy We're really gonna miss you, it's really gonna be hard without you for the rest of our lives gonna be thinking about you, life's gonna be hard and slow, But the time came when you had to go. I'll miss you my Buddy I'll miss you my friend , I promise my love for you will never end...In your finest hour we were there for you and without you things won't be the same but there's a higher power that we must answer to, and You heard him calling your name, Really gonna miss you every thing about you smiling face , I know you going to that magic place...REALLY GONNA MISS YOU \ud83d\udc94Love Emma and Entire MUNK FAMILY

Emma Winston - July 17, 2019 at 05:11 PM

CG

“ *My Wallymoons....no words can describe what you mean to me. Our 35 year friendship was more like family. I'm so glad that you had the love of your life, Tanya. She was the piece that was missing to your puzzle until you met her. To the Munk family and all of Walter's friends....I don't have to tell you how special he was, you all know. To his much loved students and players...the biggest way you can keep his spirit alive is to do your best and spread kindness whenever you can. My life won't be the same without him in it and I am sending love and prayers to everyone whose heart is breaking along with mine during this sad time. Always, Cheri Spoerry Gaita & Family*

Cheri Spoerry Gaita - July 03, 2019 at 07:24 PM

CC

“ *Coach Monk - you were an incredible help for teachers at BTMF with the football players. You were totally dedicated to helping these students. You didn't "play". You held them accountable for their actions. I will always remember our trip to Hershey Park this past year. Your relationship with our students and Kaizer.*

Cindy Cooney - June 30, 2019 at 07:38 PM

RM

“ *RIP LOVE U MY BROTHER WITH ALL M6 HEART LOVE SIS*

Roxy Mcallister - June 30, 2019 at 04:53 PM

MD

“ Tonya, Greg, Sisters and Mom - My heart is oh so heavy especially today when for the first time in some 30 plus years I did not hear my dearest and oldest friend's voice to wish him a happy birthday:(. Walter and I shared a lifelong friendship that endured so many ups and downs and highs and lows in both our lives. No matter what I don't ever remember a time when he was negative. He always made me (and I know others as well) feel like things would be okay with the positive spin he always put on things. Take comfort in knowing that he loved his family and his faith passionately. Football ,his other love, will stay alive in all the souls of all the kids he helped to coach, mentor and teach in all the forums in which he did it. For days now I have been sobbing uncontrollably at times missing my friend and knowing he wouldn't want me to. That was Walter. A man with such a big, generous giving heart that he has shared with all of us and therefore will stay with all of us in our hearts. I stand with you in this loss. I will pray that you all find peace as you go through this rough process. My love and prayers are with all of you as you mourn the loss of someone we all love dearly. Mary Ann

Mary Ann Descarfino - June 29, 2019 at 11:27 PM

RM

“ Facebook

Roxy Mcallister - June 29, 2019 at 07:44 PM