



WILLIAM JAMES IANNICELLI

November 30, 2011

William James Iannicelli

March 4, 1924 – November 29, 2011

William (Bill) James Iannicelli 87, better known to many in the Lancaster area and especially Franklin & Marshall College as “Coach I”, died peacefully on November 29, 2011 surrounded by his family at Willow Valley Retirement Community after a valiant battle with cancer.

Born in 1924 in Altoona, PA, Bill was the son of the late Donatangelo and Mary Lepore Iannicelli and was the third of four children. He was predeceased by his older brother Paul of Washington, D.C. and is survived by his older sister Grace Saclaro of Altoona and his younger brother John of Lebanon, Pa. He is also survived by his loving wife of 63 years Phyllis Shellenbarger and his two children son Michael and his wife Kimberley of Chesapeake, VA and his daughter Susan Iannicelli Ostman and her husband Per John of Orleans, MA, and three grandchildren Andrea Iannicelli, Per Ostman and David Ostman.

A lifelong athlete, coach, mentor and family man, Bill touched many lives through his personal character and his ability to build and reveal character in others. During his four years at Altoona High School, Bill was a football and Track & Field standout becoming an All-State end in 1941 and won the State long jump championship in 1942; his senior year. A football scholarship sent him to Catawaba College in North Carolina where he lettered in football and track & field. During that freshmen year, Bill also joined the United States

Marine Corps Reserve which then transferred him to Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, PA in 1943 to become part of the V-12 officer preparation program during World War II. During that time at F&M, he earned honors as a member of both the football and track & field teams highlighted by being nominated as 1st team all-state, 2nd team all-east in football and winning the javelin competition at the Penn Relays in 1944. His 1944 football season was cut short by his Marine Corps service commitment. As a second lieutenant, Bill served in China and was honorably discharged in 1946. He returned to F&M to complete his senior year where he excelled again in athletics; selected 1st Team All-State, All East and Little All American in football and in track and field won the Middle Atlantic Conference javelin throw and long jump, won the javelin throw at the Penn Relays and was All American in Javelin throw by placing 2nd in the NCAA Championship Meet. After graduating from F&M in 1948, Bill was given an opportunity to try out for the 1948 Olympics in javelin. While waiting to compete, he was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles but had to decline the offer to retain his amateur athlete status. At the trials at Evanston, Ill, Bill placed 6th, but at that time the US took only three participants. He went on to play semi-pro football for the York White Roses from 1948 to 1951.

He began his working career in 1948 as a history teacher, basketball and track coach at Manor High School in Millersville, PA. In 1949, he became a member of the Official's Club of Lancaster officiating at track & field and swimming meets for the next 56 years. Also in that year, Bill began his 40 years of service to Franklin & Marshall College; hired as a professor of physical education, assistant football coach and assistant track coach. In 1955, he became the Head Varsity Track coach. In 1968 after 19 years as assistant football coach, he became the Men's Head Cross-Country coach. In his 21 years as Head Cross Country Coach, his record was 217-54, two Middle Atlantic Conference titles and five All American Athletes. In his 35 years as Head Track Coach, Bill's record was 271-94, three Middle Atlantic Conference titles, five All American athletes and a "streak" of 88 consecutive

dual meet victories. As the original inductee to the Franklin & Marshall Sports Hall of Fame in 1969, Bill retired from F&M in 1989 as an associate professor and as its longest serving athletic coach.

After retirement, Bill was recognized for his many contributions to sports, the community and F&M. He was inducted into the Susquehanna Chapter of the PA Sports Hall of Fame – Football in 1990, received the George Kirchner Memorial Award Recognition for contributions to Sports in 1991, inducted into the Blair County Sports Hall of Fame in 1994, Franklin & Marshall College named the track the William J. Iannicelli Track in 1995, received the Lancaster Old Timers Athletic Association Annual Sports Achievement Award in 1999, received the Alumni Medal for Distinguished Service to Franklin & Marshall College in 2004 and honored as a Distinguished Alumnus of Altoona High School in 2007.

In 2005 and at 81 years of age, Bill returned to personal track & field competition after a 57 year hiatus when he began his second athletic career competing in the local Lancaster and Pennsylvania State senior games and in two National Senior Games. Over the next six years through June 2011, Bill won over 100 medals competing in jumping and throwing events, but his greatest achievements were winning the National Senior Gold Medal in Hammer Throw (85-89 age group) in 2009 and the National Senior Gold Medal in Triple Jump (80-84 age group) in 2007. His national record breaking jump of 7.33 meters still stands today.

Outside of his life in Lancaster, PA, Bill was also an integral part of the community of Belgrade, ME where he and his family spent the summers from 1958 to 2004. Through 1979, he worked at Camp Kennebec as a counselor, waterfront director, and head of maintenance. It was there on Salmon Lake where he enjoyed his passion for fishing.

In September of 2004, Bill and Phyl made the decision to move into the Willow Valley Retirement Community in Lancaster and became residents of Manor North. Bill's willingness to become involved, his generosity of time and talents,

his open, friendly and caring spirit charmed everyone who knew him at Willow Valley. He will be greatly missed and always remembered.

A viewing will be held at Sacred Heart Church, 558 West Walnut Street, Lancaster, PA at 10AM Saturday December 3, 2011 followed by a funeral Mass at 11AM. Burial will immediately follow the Mass at St. Joseph's Cemetery, Bausman, PA. Relatives and friends are then invited to attend a memorial service at 2PM at the Johnson Auditorium at Willow Valley Manor North, 600 Willow Valley Square, Lancaster, PA.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to support the Bill Iannicelli Award Fund at Franklin & Marshall College. Checks should be made payable to Franklin & Marshall College (attention: Gift Accounting Dept.) and sent to Franklin & Marshall College, P.O. Box 3003, Lancaster, PA 17604. All monetary gifts in memory of Bill will be used to specifically honor outstanding track & field athletes at F&M through the Bill Iannicelli Fund.

Tribute Wall



“ *WILLIAM JAMES IANNICELLI*

October 22, 2023 at 11:34 PM



“ *To Coach I's family,
I remember the first time I met Coach I on my initial tour of Franklin & Marshall and he really struck a cord with me with his genuineness and honesty. I really was taken in by him and enjoyed running X-country and track for him at F&M. I am extremely fortunate to have known him. I am truly saddened and I am sorry that I did not have a chance to reconnect with him long before his passing.*

Gregory Skaff '88 - December 15, 2011 at 11:44 AM



“ *To Coach Iannicelli's Family, Coach I was like a father to me. I have a wonderful father so with Coach I it seemed as though I had two great fathers. He pushed us very hard to excel and we did. He loved us as athletes, as students and as human beings. We excelled as much for him and our teammates as we did for ourselves. I thank God for Coach I.*

Tom Quickel - December 10, 2011 at 11:33 AM



“ *Coach I will be greatly missed. Coach I taught me how to play racquetball. He was a wonderful man. Always a smile on his face and a cherry hello. My condolences.*

Heather (Cercena) Skorinko'78 - December 07, 2011 at 06:19 AM

JM

“ To all of Bill's family,

My condolences go out to the Iannicelli Family. I was on the Track and Field team from 1955-57. Bill was a great coach, athlete and mentor to us all. He was with us in 2007 as our class celebrated our 50th Reunion. I felt privileged to have been associated with such a fine person.

John E. Maier, M.D. '57

John E. Maier, M.D. - December 05, 2011 at 09:45 AM

AB

“ Dear Phyl and family,

Please accept our heartfelt condolences on Bill's passing. Bill was wonderful husband, father and friend. Today, as we mourn his passing, we also celebrate a wonderful life. Bill inspired us all.

Sincerely,

AL & ELSA BROOKS

Al & Elsa Brooks - December 04, 2011 at 03:20 AM

MG

“ Dear Phyllis and Family,

Sorry we are not able to attend Bill's funeral, but our thoughts and prayers are with you at this time. Bill was and will be an inspiration to many who will follow and will be greatly missed by all.

Love, Moyra and Gary

Moyra and Gary Glass - December 03, 2011 at 10:47 PM

GS

“ *Phyllis and family--may you find strength together during this difficult time.*

Bill is an amazing person--loved by all who had the pleasure to meet him.

I am crying thinking of the many times he invited my husband & me to your home

at Willow Valley, with much regret and deep sadness, I am sorry we never took him up

on his offer.

With heartfelt love, Bill & Gretchen Stark

Gretchen & Bill Stark - December 02, 2011 at 11:04 PM

TJ

“ *I had the honor and privilege to have known Bill through my coaching at F&M as well as through his participation in the Senior Games on both the State and the National Level. It is with much sadness that I learned of his passing after his valiant fight with cancer. Bill was always a fighter and a competitor. He never did anything half way and through that he taught many young men values and skills that are highly respected and greatly treasured in both deeds and thoughts. He has the respect and admiration of many athletes from F&M who were part of his program and legacy as well as fellow coaches in the Mid Atlantic region. To his lovely wife Phyllis and his sons and the rest of his family, please accept my words of condolences. Rest assured that Bill is now in a better place and that his memory will be valued by all who got to know and love him, as I know that I certainly will do so.*

Trey Jackson - December 02, 2011 at 02:55 PM

DS

“ On behalf of my father, George, and our whole family, I'd like to offer our condolences to the Iannicelli family. Coach I was a dear friend to us all and most especially to my father. He touched us deeply and we shall miss him. Godspeed, Coach.

David Storck

David Storck - December 02, 2011 at 01:05 PM

RW

“ I am sorry to hear of Bill's passing. He was a wonderful influence on my life. Please accept my heartfelt condolences.

*Rusty Ward
Class of 1969*

Rusty Ward - December 02, 2011 at 01:29 AM

SP

“ My condolences to Coach I's family. He was an extraordinary man whose legacy will endure well into the future.

Steve Peed - December 01, 2011 at 11:01 PM

LM

“ *Phyl and the rest of the family
Please accept my condolences for your loss. Coach I is the reason I have an enduring connection to F&M. He was the first person I met at F&M, the person I shared athletic highs and lows with and Coach I was the person that continued to be a presence and a champion for our college long after I graduated. He made people and things better then he found them.*

*Sincerely
Lou Martucci, '79*

Lou Martucci - December 01, 2011 at 09:57 PM

P'

“*Michael and family, I'm so sorry to hear of the loss of your father, who not only was an great athlete and an excellent coach, but an outstanding human being. I'm keeping you all in my thoughts and prayers at this difficult time.*”

Peggy Malnati, '82 - December 01, 2011 at 06:02 AM