



# The Steamer

## Remembering Bud Furillo

### Final Quick Steam & a Rub

How magical is Ojai, that you can pick up the local paper and read some interesting sidelights on sports, commend the Ojai Valley News in a letter to the editor for printing Bud Furillo's column, and then get a phone call from him to say thanks. Such was the beginning of a lovely friendship that will outlast the couple of years of reality, because I believe that every time I revel in a Trojan football or Yankee baseball victory, Bud will smile along with me from sportswriter heaven. He was such a delightful person to spend time with — full of sports history, anecdotes, a unique perspective on the famous and infamous — and full of heart to make it come alive again.

— June Behar, Ojai

I had just read Bud's most recent article where he mentioned cheering for Robert. I thought what a sweetheart he was to say those kind things. I was going to call him and ask if he would like to travel with us to L.A. to watch a practice sometime in August. Then what a surprise to hear of his passing. Perhaps Robert's grandparents were there to greet him and thank him for the encouraging words for me.

Of course, Robert is a defensive back invitee not quarterback, but that would have straightened itself out in time. We'll certainly remember Bud and know he'll be cheering for USC from Heaven!

— Laura Erickson, Ojai

I'm writing to express my thoughts on the passing of Bud Furillo and the legacy that he left behind. I had the distinct pleasure of working with Bud at KPSI-AM in Palm Springs, where he hosted his weekday sports talk show from "The Steam Room." His dedication to his craft was legendary. He would dig for all the answers then relay those to the listener in a way you could understand. Bud worked hard and smart. Bud could be moody at times, but in the end, the work is what was most important. He loved everything about it. I will remember my many conversations with him about sports, family and life. The homemade pasta sauce he brought to the station dressed many of my dishes. All he asked for in return was the empty jars. A talent like Bud comes along only once in a great while. He will be missed by many.

— Frank Torok, KEZN-FM Palm Desert

My husband and I would simply like to say goodbye to a man we never met, yet who will be sorely missed by us both. Bud Furillo's column was something he and I looked forward to twice a week, something that surprises me since I'm not a huge sports fan. However, his engaging stories and candid straight-talk appealed to us both. Many times we would read his column out loud to each other; just to be sure the other didn't miss a word.

When my husband came into the kitchen today to announce Bud's passing, he sadly said, "I feel like I lost a close friend." It's funny how someone you've never met could have such a strong impact on strangers. So, a toast to you Bud! May you make the angels laugh, just as you've made us laugh. You will be missed.

— Valarie Ochoa, Ojai

What a loss. Bud was not afraid to be a human full of virtues and flaws. He was passionate and loyal. He made being "on the bus" acceptable for fans and writers alike. Although I am a diehard Bruin fan, it was an honor to be "ragged on" by Bud whenever UCLA lost to his beloved Trojans. In fact, it was an honor to know him and have him write for us in Ojai.

— Wally McCall, Ojai



Bud Furillo with baseball greats Joe DiMaggio, left, Sparky Anderson and Mickey Mantle.



Above, left to right, Bud with Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra, Perry Como and Pete Rose.

Below, a birthday cake from the Dodgers. Below middle, a visit with President Dwight Eisenhower. Bottom left, Furillo and Mark Spitz. Bottom right, with Billy D. Williams in "Brian's Song."



Left, A trip to Disneyland in the 1960s from the Furillo family album.

Below, with Jayne Mansfield.

Bottom, a contrast in heights as Furillo clowns around with Wilt Chamberlain.

Below left, Bud poses with some bikini-clad beauties.



I have just read the devastating news. Zoot-suiter Bud Furillo is gone, but not forgotten.

Bud wrote from the heart and knew the history of a ballpark and its people. He knew all the greats like Mantle and Maris. Bud was the only sportswriter that Maris could trust in 1961 and could talk to.

We always looked forward to his next column in the OVN. Bud will be dearly missed. A terrific guy.

— Jeff Ketelsen, Ojai

"Heya Bud" was a common phrase we heard when Bud Furillo walked into our news office. If you said, "Heya Bud, can you..." he would. If you said, "Heya, Bud, do you know..." he did. And if you said, "Heya Bud, you wanna..." he would say, "When do we leave?"

At this paper we are humbled and blessed that we had the honor of being a part of "The Steamer's" life. At our monthly all-staff meetings, Bud would be there with wit, wisdom and well-

needed input. Our favorite phrase was his "next" book, "The bases were Loaded, and so was I."

So to Bud — our team is so lost without you. But having you was the best win we ever had.

— Kristi Underwood

When I started here at the OVN and met Bud we instantly got along. I loved hearing his baseball stories. He was a walking Sports History Channel.

We had lunch two weeks ago and he was doing great telling stories and how excited he was about his book. I hope his book comes out someday so everyone can hear the stories we were fortunate to hear. I know he is up in a cool lounge in the sky relaxing with the Rat Pack and catching a daytime baseball game.

— Matt Haag

"When I spoke him with Sunday night, he sounded in

great spirits. He was excited about the Italians, though he was not a soccer fan. He was so instrumental in so many careers. He was getting 10 times the ratings of the other guys. They don't make guys like him anymore and they never will. The four years I worked with him were like going to graduate school. He would tell you amazing stories that always turned out to be true."

— Steve Kelly, Palm Springs