



David G. Adolph

June 6, 1937 - February 11, 2017

A Funeral Mass for David G. Adolph will be held Friday February 17, 2017 at 10:00 am at the St Brigid of Kildare Catholic Church, 7179 Avery Road, Dublin, OH 43017, Powell Ohio. Interment will be at St. Joseph Cemetery in Mogadore, Ohio. Mr. Adolph was born on June 6, 1937 in Akron Ohio to the late Eugene A. and Dorothy (Kissel) Adolph. He passed away Sunday February 12, 2017. David is preceded in death by his wife Betty He is survived by his sons Michael (Laurie) Adolph, Mark (Mignon) Adolph and Thomas (Karen) Adolph; grandchildren Michael, Matt, Andrew, Annelise, Alec, Madelyn, David and William; step children Shane McCarthy & Heather Cavazos, and their grandchildren Ava, Trey, Jake, and Owen; and his brothers Charles "Pete" (Christine) Adolph and Tom (Carol) Adolph.

"The Adolph family has roots in Ohio and deep roots with the Cleveland Browns," said Adolph's son, Mark. "We really appreciate the Browns fans and players for all the support and love they've given him and the outpouring of condolences through this difficult time as a family."

A native of nearby Mogadore, Adolph worked in football at various levels for more than 55 years, coaching numerous Hall of Fame players and appearing in a handful of the sport's most memorable games. He began his career at Cleveland's Shaw High School in 1961 and held an analyst position at the University of Michigan upon his death. He spent nearly a decade with the Browns, joining Sam Rutigliano's staff as defensive line coach in 1979 -- his first year in the NFL and a season that ended with a heartbreaking playoff loss

to the Oakland Raiders -- and eventually working his way up to defensive coordinator in 1984. He was the defensive line coach from 1979-81 and linebackers coach from 1981-83. After a one-year hiatus, Adolph returned to Marty Schottenheimer's staff in 1986 as the Browns' defensive coordinator during the team's back to back appearances in the AFC Championship in 1986 and 1987. En route to the 1986 AFC Championship, Cleveland held its opponents to 17 points or fewer in eight of its final 11 regular season games. The next year, Cleveland limited its foes to 17 or fewer points in 10 of 15 games. The Browns were the NFL's second-best scoring defense in a 1987 season that ended with a dramatic loss to the Broncos in the AFC title game. Adolph logged 21 years of coaching at the professional level, including 14 as a defensive coordinator. He appeared in the AFC Championship as a coach on three different teams and made 12 career playoff appearances. After his time in Cleveland, Adolph spent the rest of his NFL years in the AFC West with the Chargers (1985, 95-96), Chiefs (92-94, 99) and Raiders (89-91, 97-98). He coached the likes of Derrick Thomas, Junior Seau and Lyle Alzado, whose respective tragic deaths crushed him, Mark said, because he viewed them and treated them as family members. An all-conference guard at the University of Akron, Adolph was a commissioned officer in the Air Force from 1959-61 before he became a coach. He worked with Woody Hayes at Ohio State (1977-78) and served as Jim Harbaugh's defensive coordinator at the University of San Diego (2004-07). He also coached at Akron ('63-64), Connecticut (65-68), Kentucky (69-72), Illinois (73-76) and San Diego (2004-07). He assisted Jim Tressel's and Urban Meyer's staffs at Ohio State and multiple staffs at Michigan from 2005-2016

Friends may call Thursday from 6:00pm to 8:00pm at the RUTHERFORD FUNERAL HOME AT POWELL. Condolences to www.rutherfordfuneralhome.com. Friends may contribute to the James Cancer Hospital or annualgiving@osumc.edu prostate cancer research fund 315095 in his memory.

Cemetery Details

St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery

2643 Waterloo Road
Mogadore, OH 44260

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **16**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Rutherford Funeral Home at Powell
450 West Olentangy Street
Powell, OH 43065
(614) 792-1471
info@rutherfordfuneralhome.com
<https://www.rutherfordfuneralhomes.com/>

Funeral Mass

FEB **17**. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Brigid of Kildare Catholic Church
7179 Avery Road
Dublin, OH 43017
<http://www.stbrigidofkildare.org/>

Tribute Wall



“ *David G. Adolph*

January 28, 2023 at 10:24 AM



“ *So very sorry to hear of your loss. You all are in my prayers. While it's been many years since since Tommy and I were close friends I'll always have fond memories of you all.*

Tom Freeman - February 28, 2017 at 08:51 PM



“ *Dear Michael, Mark, and Thomas,
Our deepest sympathy for the loss of your father. He was an outstanding athlete, and even a better person!! WE played football together at the University of Akron. He played center and guard and I was the quarterback on some very good teams. I have many fond memories of those years with Dave. He was one of the best !!
Sincerely,
Tom & Jan Boggs*

Tom Boggs - February 16, 2017 at 07:45 AM



“ *Truly one of the finest men in the coaching profession. I was proud to work with him. May his soul rest in peace.
God Bless,
Chuck Priefer*

Chuck Priefer - February 15, 2017 at 03:24 PM

JM

“ So sorry for your loss. I was a radio broadcaster for the Cleveland Browns during the time Dave coached here. I had many great conversations with Dave and really enjoyed his company. My prayers are with you...Jim Mueller

Jim Mueller - February 15, 2017 at 11:02 AM

CP

Dave Adolph was an outstanding football coach, but he was even a better person. I and so many more will miss him greatly. It was an honor and privilege to have him with us in K.C. CARL PETERSON (Former Pres/GM/CEO, K.C. Chiefs)

Carl D. Peterson - February 23, 2017 at 06:55 PM



“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of David G. Adolph.



February 14, 2017 at 03:43 PM

HU

“ God Bless and Thank YOU, COACH for your service in The United States Air Force.. RIP ... And Semper Fi..... SIR.



Herb Guyer-Sharfenaker USMC - February 14, 2017 at 03:19 PM



“ *Vivid Recollections was purchased for the family of David G. Adolph.*



February 14, 2017 at 11:14 AM



“ *My condolences to the Adolph family.*

I had the privilege to meet Coach Adolph because I was blessed to teach 3 of his grandchildren and coach 2 of them in football. Coach Adolph came in to meet/clinic me on coaching defense on several occasions. His depth of thinking was the first thing I noticed and have since aspired to emulate. Being a life-long Brown's fan I was in awe of Coach Adolph and his willingness to teach me some football. Do You Love Football? His love for coaching the game of football was only surpassed by his love for his family.

I pray that God's comfort will envelop the Adolph family. May God's peace which surpasses all understanding be upon each of you.

Mark Hundley

Mark Hundley - February 14, 2017 at 10:27 AM

GB

“ Coach Adolph was one of the greatest men and coaches I have known. He was a coach for Rick Forzano at the University of Connecticut, when I was a player. He was bright and always had an academic approach to coaching. I can't remember one time he didn't have a smile on his face. He was a great mentor to me, and one of the reasons I choose coaching as a profession. My my most sincere sympathy to his family.

Gary Blackney

Gary Blackney - February 14, 2017 at 09:55 AM

TA

“ I first met Dave at the 1977 Orange Bowl. I was a GA at Ohio State and Coach Hayes had just hired Dave to coach the defensive line. I thought he had just been discharged from the Marine Corps. He was extremely fit, had a flat top hair cut and a square jaw.

We reconnected when he came back to Ohio State in 2008 to mentor players and coaches alike, while assuring the players were keeping up with their academics. He was one of the greatest story tellers I ever encountered. And he asked questions that required deep thought. His favorite question was, "Do you LOVE football?" He told me the story of how he stood in Coach Gruden's doorway after a tough loss and asked him, "Coach, do you love football? Do you REALLY love football?" It became the title to a Gruden book.

He had an personality that drew you to him. He was wise but loved to play dumb. I always told him he would give Columbo a run for his money. We became good buddies and the Bobsy boys, as he called Coach Tucker, Coach Heacock and I, met for breakfast every couple of weeks. Four old ball coaches, arguing football and sharing predictions. What a great time we had. I know we al four looked forward to those mornings.

We lost a great football coach, a great man but most of al, I lost a good friend. I'll miss you Dave. You meant so much to me.

Todd Alles - February 13, 2017 at 10:27 PM