

Rest in Peace, Bert Sugar

Written by Michael Woods
Sunday, 25 March 2012 17:40



The hat, the stogie, the tales, the cracks, the presence--you knew Bert Sugar was in the arena on fightnight. The author-editor-historian has stepped out from the spotlight; he lost his fight against lung cancer on Sunday, and died at Northern Westchester Medical Center. Sugar was 75 years old.

Sugar had a harrowing hospital stay in late fall, he told me in mid December, but true to form, the Chappaqua, NY resident mocked the grueling battle and indignities associated with cancer and pneumonia in trademark form. "Half the people are rooting for me to recover, half not," he said. "From the radiation, I'm a human french fry."

More soberly, he noted that "when you live like an idiot, it catches up with you."

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Indeed, he enjoyed his tobacco products and amber liquids, and saw the symmetry of his behavior and his plight. "I've been an editor, lawyer, adman, announcer...I've gotten away with it. This has been fun. Maybe I'm paying for it."

Our condolences go out to his wife and children. The news was first reported on the CBS 2 news website.

Sugar, who made the Boxing Hall of Fame in 2005, offered me something of a life and career overview in that phone interview, and his trademark wit was there. "I was a lawyer, I didn't practice for more than a month," he said. "I did pass the bar...it was the only bar I ever passed."

The clashes with the writers when he was editing Boxing Illustrated and Ring, the time he decked his boss at the ad agency, he said he didn't look back and wonder what if. "I don't regret a step," he told me.

We'd say we regret not having him around longer, not seeing him churn out his billionth book, or hearing his chuckle..but truth is, the man packed a lot of living into his days. Rest in peace, Bert.

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Radam G says:

Danggit! My deepest condolence. I was hoping that he would pull through. Holla!

Real Talk says:

Man I can't believe this!!!! I'm shocked and hurt. I had no idea Bert Sugar had Cancer ...man...! All he needed was some Noni Juice. I'm going to miss Bert...breaking down the fight and giving his picks...the witty wise crack and sense of humor. R.I.P. Bert....you will be missed. Dueces

amayseng says:

man, this is horrible news..

DaveB says:

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Wow, I didn't know he had cancer either. Really not that old. My condolences. I'll really miss him. Seems he had been around for ever. I always liked his delivery, good boxing man.

brownsugar says:

I thought Bert would live forever... sorry to hear the news... will anybody truly replace him?... I doubt it.

ali says:

Sad news...im really going to miss him telling us stories of all the fights back in the day...he was one of the big reasons why I wanted to learn more about the history of boxing...there will never be another Bert Sugar...may he rest in peace.

GANZ says:

Very, very sad news... 10 Bells for the Man, Thank you for all the drinks, stories and laughs. R.I.P Sugarman, you will be missed.

Matthew says:

Bert Randolph Sugar was truly one of a kind. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Sugar at the Irish Pub in Atlantic City prior to the Hopkins-Pavlik fight in 2008, and he was gracious enough to sit and talk with three of my friends and me for nearly two hours. We sat there like students in a classroom and listened to Mr. Sugar tell stories as only he could. He could not have been nicer, and it was an experience I will never forget. Rest in peace, Mr. Sugar!

deepwater says:

Bert never refused me a photo or a handshake. My fiance just lit his cigar last summer. God bless Bert Sugar. They dont make em like they used to thats for sure

brownsugar says:

great pic deepwater