

Brother Jennings would enter the class ,as usual, bellowing, “Hamill and Tiernan , front !!” We would assume our positions sat either side of his desk and to the hilarity of the class , with a word from either of us (even correct answers!) the other would suffer a solid clip from the good Brother. Only Harv could conjure the challenge of seeing who could get the other whacked the most !! Regardless, Brother Jennings was always our favourite English teacher and he actually liked our class despite our (mainly Harv’s!!) irreverent behavior . Br J engrained in us the importance of never letting the most powerful words or adjectives being cheaply used or understated. Hyperbole and exaggeration infuriated him. We would evaluate each-others essays for this.

That trait he engrained in us, now manifests. When it comes to Mark “Harv” Hamill no exaggeration, hyperbole, no grandiose, no adjective is over used.

By true Oxford English Dictionary definition he is defined primarily by three characteristics:

A)Legendary

From being internationally acclaimed across Ireland, England, Australia , Canada, US, Italy and many other nations as the ultimate Elvis improvising impersonator (global folklore suggests, all along, Elvis may have been impersonating Harv) .

To, Adult Entertainer who could uniquely provoke amongst his peers an uncontrollable cocktail of stomach contorting laughter and stomach cringing embarrassment (Body flaunting , cake face slamming, fountain dunking, hedge-bombing, “Carry-On” scuba-diving) .

To, Children’s Entertainer (Panda Suits , wrestling beatings, gobsmackingly dodgy life advice) .

To, formally recognised, outstanding contributions in the field of Accountancy and Risk management across Australasia (including commendations from former Australian Foreign Minister , Board members at Protiviti, Board members at Fortescue mining.)

B) Unique

A truly unparalleled combination, throughout life, of elite performance and irreverent behaviour.

This is best microcosmed through Harv’s almost mythical school exploits demonstrating both academic achievement and pedagogical reprimand.

Academia:

- Top 5 in third year for academic performance in Junior exams.
- Top 5 in fifth year for academic performance in O’Levels
- Top 5 in seventh year for academic performance in A-levels (including the Mickey Crilly award for most beloved Economic student)

Reprimand:

- *1st Year, Mr Dynan:* Ingenious vote rigging to ensure we both won the class prefect elections (To date unproven in court).
- *2nd Year , Br Jennings:* Inappropriate ad-libbing whilst reciting Shakespeare romantic scene aloud.
- *3rd Year , Joint Mr Woods and Mr McToal :* Inappropriate use of the 20ft long gym ropes within shorts.
- *4th Year, Unknown Student Teacher :* Misleading said teacher , to announce at assembly the parachute club meeting atop the science block after school.
- *5th Yr , Miss Fitsmaurice :* Detaining, humanely, a rather small first year within classroom locker during French class.

C) Injured Sportsgod

Ultimately Harv (Mark Hamill, as a reminder) forged a stellar reputation in 3 main sports however for all his brilliance, there was a familiar challenge. He would argue he was too powerful for his own mortal frame.

- 1) *Gaelic Football* : A dynamic, strong, skilled, fearless Center Half Back for club, school and county. He led by example driving many of his school teams to finals and then
 - (a) Dalton Cup final – missed due to broken wrist
 - (b) Corn-na-Nog final – missed due to bone break in foot
 - (c) McRory Cup (ultimate trophy in School football) final – missed due to torn Achilles

- 2) *Basketball* : Gifted small forward with a pure shot (Swish or airball!). unstoppable drive and formidable rebounder
 - (a) Ulster Schools Senior Final – Missed due to torn Achilles
 - (b) Irish University Championship final – Missed due to Neck strain

- 3) *Cycle racing* : A relentless, stamina-driven competitor and team leader
 - (a) Multiple titles regional and state-wide won in Australia - major accident resulting in extensive skin and tissue rips and burns plus, at least 20 additional riders toppled

As all who read this can imagine and recall, there are many other anecdotes and testimony that could be drawn upon to capture the Legendary, Unique, Sportsgod that is Mark Hamill.

I beseech you to honour him and spend a moment recalling them now and often.

I am honoured, humbled and of course very much scarred (not scared!), to have shared 41 years of Best-Mate-Ship with Harv. His profound legacy, which we are all mandated to protect, is a truly powerful trinity, that no other mortal will ever offer. That is:

- 1) An unparalleled desire to make people laugh
- 2) An unmatched ability to make people laugh (and cringe!)
- 3) A truly unique purity of spirit, goodness and generosity. This allowed Harv to see only the best in others and to embrace them into his circle for as long as they chose to stay.

He was very beloved and as horrific as his passing is, fortunately, there is solace to be drawn from the knowledge that he did know he was very much beloved. Our hearts, support and prayers are forever with Jane, Ronan and Naimh.

I'm proud to declare the void is unfillable. R.I.P. Mark "Harv" Hamill, age 53.

Liam "Lambs" Tiernan