

Jesse Ray Ford Perpetual Trophy

The Jesse Ray Ford Perpetual Trophy is awarded annually to the team (or individual) that earns the highest total number of points in a given year's Bedford County Hunter Pace Series. The winning team must compete in all paces and in the same division in all paces.

The trophy is a memorial to Jesse Ray Ford who served as first whip to both the Bedford County Hunt and the Fox Valley Beagles. Jesse Ray, a local Rustburg boy, was larger than life. He was the Amherst County Extension agent for years and a 4-H leader who profoundly impacted the lives of those he touched. As Dot Morcom accurately put it, "he made the lives of dozens of Amherst County teens have a brilliance that could not be expressed in words by dedicating each weekend to spending time with those kids in his 4-H group." He left the area to earn his Ph.D. at University of Tennessee, and from there was hired as Professional Huntsman for the Midland Foxhounds in Columbus, Ga., a truly legendary pack. Jesse Ray served in this position until diagnosed with a brain tumor in the 1990's. He returned home to Rustburg with his wife, Julie, and three sons, and passed away in 1999. Rev Jerry Falwell personally gave his eulogy and there was not a dry eye in the crowd. To quote Med Long: "We all loved and adored him. He brought out the best in everyone one he met and I've never, ever met anyone who could make me laugh as hard as he could. He was, in a word, magical."



Jesse Ray Ford

November 2, 1944 – March 10, 1999