Article Side

Christopher Reeve â€“ a never giving up superman by Mark Bennett

Article published on December 14th 2011 | Celebrities

Just a few days back, I was checking the TV guide and found that they were showing the movie â€•Supermanâ€• on Fox Movie Channel. I have always been a great fan of the comic strip Superman and wanted to watch this movie at any cost. But then I remembered that I had to take my niece to her ballet classes, so I decided to record the movie on my Verizon FiOS TVâ€™s DVR system.

To my utter dismay, I found that it was not the Superman movie which I wanted to see. I wanted to watch the movie â€œSuperman Returnsâ€• that was released in 2006. But this was the old superman movie of 1980s in which Christopher Reeves had acted. Since I had recorded it, I decided to watch the movie. To be frank, the movie was a kind of less appealing to me, but I liked the acting of the lead actor Christopher Reeves who acted as Superman.

Now for those who donâ€™t know who Christopher Reeves is, he was the first actor to make the role of Superman famous in a movie. It was said that producers at first were not interested in casting him as the Superman as he was quite skinny and did not have the physique for the role. But the casting director insisted the producers to give him a try as he had the required height i.e. he was almost 6 feet 4 inches tall and his facial feature suited for the role of Superman. So he auditioned for the role and got the part. Now since he was skinny, Christopher Reeves decided to prepare for the role of Superman by going for body building .He went for an intense two months training in weigh lifting, cardiovascular exercises, increasing the intake of his food, almost he started eating double the amount of food which he normally consumed , along with high intake of protein diet.

The Superman film was released and it became a quite successful which was followed by sequel of Superman 2, 3 and 4. Due to the tremendous success of the superman movie, Reeves almost came to be known as Superman Reeves establishing him as a commercial actor. He even acted in offbeat roles and was also involved in various political campaigns.

In 1995, due to an accident Reeves suffered a spinal injury which made him a quadriplegic i.e. paralyzed from head to toe. During a horse riding event, Reeves fell from the back of his horse Buck. Even though he wore a helmet, it did not injure his brain, but the impact of the fall dislocated his spinal cord from his skull. Due to the fall, Reeves fell unconscious and was not breathing. The paramedics took him to a nearby hospital immediately. The doctors treated him and came to the conclusion that his spinal cord was dislocated from his skull and he needed surgery immediately, but the chance of recovery was just fifty-fifty. Reeves at first told his wife to kill him as he did not have the eagerness to live like a vegetable, but his wife told him that she would be there for him even in this difficult time and told him to have faith in himself.

The doctors operated on Reeves, by trying to connect his skull and vertebrate using titanium pins. They drilled his skulls and even inserted wires connecting to the spinal cord. The operation was over and Reeves survived. After the operation, Reeves went through a lot of therapy like physical therapy where he had to try to move his hand muscles and legs. But the most painful therapy was the respiratory therapy where the doctors used to insert tube into his mouth and checked for his breathing volume i.e. the amount of air he could inhale. Reeves used to struggle as he tried to reach the minimum level so that he could breathe without the help of the machine. Slowly he increased his breathing volume and maintained it at a normal rate. Doctors were surprised with his recovery and felt that in the coming years Reeves condition would improve and he would be able to walk and move his hands again.

Reeves decided to use his star image to make people know more about quadriplegic disorder and

also established the Reeve-Irvine Research Center, which became one of the most famous and leading spinal cord research centers and also founded the Christopher Reeve Foundation (currently known as the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation) to fund for the research on quadriplegic disorder and use the grants to improve the lives of the people suffering from this disorder.

Reeves passed away on March 2006, due to cardiac arrest. Before dying, he showed a lot of improvement in his condition where he was able to identify the difference between hot and cold temperature and move certain parts of his body. Reeves struggled with his condition, but never made it stand in his way of what he wanted to do in his life.

Article Source:
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Mark enjoys all kinds of movies and comedy sitcoms and he follows them on his TV connected to a Verizon FiOS TV

Article Keywords:
verizon cable, fios tv, Verizon FiOS TV

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