Paul Fry tributes:

Geoff Lester - Very sad, Lifers are falling all too fast. Good guy too.

Hilary Watson - Paul was such a nice bloke, John (Watson) thought he had a natural talent for the Features desk and was glad to have him on the team.

Geoff Duffield - Paul was a lovely, genial person who fitted in with everyone during his tenure at The Sporting Life and carved out a marvellous career for himself in the journalistic world. God bless you Paul.

Kevin Impey - My interactions with Paul while he worked at The Sporting Life were limited as I was kennelled on the greyhound desk. However, Paul soon became one of the Life's family and was always well liked and highly regarded. Like Paul, my late wife, Patricia, was also first diagnosed with bowel cancer in April, although it was not until the following month we learned it was terminal. Tragically, she died in August, but I did exchange several emails with Paul and, despite his own situation, he tried to raise my spirits with his positive attitude.

Fred Parsons - It seems Paul had suffered badly from earlier in the year. I feel gutted as Paul wanted a link up as we had worked together on the Life and the Mail on Sunday, and I failed in my efforts to contact him. Now it's too late! Paul was a talented journalist and RIP Paul.

Paul Duffett - I remember Paul as being very approachable, modest and looking at life from the lighter side during his time on The Sporting Life in the 1980s, and he always seemed to have a ruler in his hand!

Paul's humour and pragmatic approach during his illness conveyed the reality of his situation which made it easier for the rest of us to understand. It would be unjust to his memory to dwell on that though – he was a very likeable and valued colleague who will be much missed and my condolences go to Pam and the family on their great loss.

Jeremy Chapman - Such sad news. I got to know Paul when the Life features department shared an office with me at Farringdon– he had little to no interest in horseracing but designed very neat pages. So it wasn't a great surprise that his stay with The Life was relatively short. We got on so well I Invited him to help me with the Ryder Cup coverage at The Belfry in 1989 ,and we shared a hotel and some meals together. He was thrilled to see his first Ryder Cup and even mentioned the experience and his winning golf bets in his autobiography. We were all sorry when he left the Life for more rewarding pastures on the Mail On Sunday, as he was artistically talented. What happened to this lovely guy at such a relatively young age was so cruel.

Mick Malone - Very sad to hear of Paul's passing, particularly as he had recently been paying tribute to our other colleagues lost in 2023. I had no idea of how seriously ill he was. He fitted straight into the Life, with his laid back attitude and very sharp wit.

He was particularly interested in getting a Life football team together again. Most of us still playing were into our thirties but, he galvanised enough interest to put a team into a Press League. When Robert Maxwell arrived he created the usual uncertainty connected with the Life's future. Hardly any of us wanted to work for Maxwell and what he represented.

Paul had the same view but, when Maxwell offered redundancies to employees on all Mirror Group titles, he decided to take the opportunity and leave, securing a position on the Mail on Sunday. Typically, his leaving speech contained the, never-to-be-forgotten one liner: "I'd rather leave with a fat cheque in my pocket than be in the pocket of a fat Czech." Totally summed up his fantastic sense of humour. Rest in peace Paul.

John Curle - It's funny the things that stick in your head. Paul was working with John Watson on features, and he produced artwork for a page that was really terrific. I think it

may have been for a Cheltenham Gold Cup preview, and Paul had the three market leaders for the race expertly cut out to make it look as if they were all jumping the last fence together. It was a great idea and worked brilliantly. It was certainly ahead of its time.

MIck Connaughton - It was really shocking to learn of Paul Fry's death at such a young age. I always regarded him as one of the younger generation compared to many of us. An extremely talented individual and, though it was all a long time ago, I remember him as having a 'can-do' attitude and nothing was ever too much trouble for him. Big loss when he moved to the Mail and I have no doubt that his ability contributed a great deal to that title's success. RIP Paul.