

# Bobby Douglass

b. 1947



Robert Gilchrist “Bobby” Douglass was born on June 22, 1947 in Manhattan, Kansas to Robert G. and Dorothy A. Douglass. Bobby has a brother, Bill. They also had two sisters, Deborah and Valerie, both now deceased.

The Douglass family moved to El Dorado, Kansas in 1949 when Robert Douglass completed his degree at Kansas State University. At first living in army housing, then on Denver, the family later made their home at 335 North Arthur.

While playing football for the University of Kansas, Bobby burst out of oblivion with all the force of a Kansas tornado, churning the air with long passes, demolishing opposing forces on the ground. His rise was steady, rarely faltering, and by the time it reached a pinnacle, Douglass was being hailed as the greatest quarterback in the land.

During his senior college year, he received numerous All-American honors. The Associated Press board named Bobby Douglass to their second berth; he narrowly lost a first team berth to Notre Dame’s Terry Hanratty.

The slingshot arm of Bobby Douglass would cock and fire when least expected. Nobody had to wait on his passes; they traveled in a flash, from 20, 40 or even 60 yards away. When Douglass threw to receiver George McGowan, the play was destined to be spectacular, no matter what the outcome. “I had trouble holding onto Bob’s passes at first,” McGowan recalled. “Maybe it was just the idea that he threw so hard. But during the latter part of the season, I can’t remember dropping too many.”

Graduating from college in 1968, Douglass went on to a ten-year National Football League career, mostly for the Chicago Bears. At this time, the Bears were still playing at the famous Wrigley Field. He also played for the Chargers, Saints and Packers. He then made the switch to professional baseball, signing with the Chicago White Sox as a relief pitcher for their AAA affiliate.

Bobby is now divorced. From his first marriage, he had one daughter. From a second marriage, he has two more daughters and three sons. All of his children have played various sports during their high school years; two went on to play sports in college.

Following retirement from professional sports, Douglass invested in restaurants and real estate sales, development and ownership. He was also a partner in the ownership of two hotels. In 2004, he led a team of investors in the purchase of the eighty-year old Eldridge Hotel located in Lawrence, Kansas during a bankruptcy auction. William Quantrill's raiders destroyed an earlier hotel, built in same location in 1858 and leased by Col. Shalor W. Eldridge, in 1863. The present-day hotel, the fourth such structure at this site, was built in 1925-1926.

Douglass holds membership in Beta Theta Pi from his college days and is still a very active member of this fraternity.