

Carol Speaks about Richard on Calendar

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The transcript below was taken from **Calendar, June 28 2005**

PRESENTER: Well, Carol Vorderman has taken time out to join us this evening. Carol, thank you very much indeed. It must be an impossible time for everyone connected with the programme, but more importantly, for you personally having been there so long with Richard.

CAROL: Well... you know. It's the hardest time, I think, for Kathryn, his partner, and James his son really. But *Countdown*, you know we started 23 years ago - (SNIFFS) - and it started funnily enough as *Calendar Countdown*. There was six shows and I wasn't on that and then they started on Channel Four and that was the first time I met Richard when I was 21. And we've done nearly 4,000 shows together and *Countdown* has a tiny little team of people. One of the producers was a contestant on the very first series, erm *Richard Whiteley* and our other producer, Damian, was a champion about 10 years ago. And loads of people *Richard Whiteley* the camera crews and

so one, we've *all* been on it, *all* this long journey together. You know? Erm... When people, in the early days wrote *Countdown* off really, and wrote Richard off and all the rest of us, we kind of laughed our way through it, and we regard him as the boss as the family really. The Don. (LAUGHS)

PRESENTER: It's very hard to believe that he has gone because we knew he was very ill... but *everyone* expected him to come through it.

CAROL: Well, of course he was coming back. He was coming back to us and - (GETS UPSET) - we thought that perhaps he'll be back to do the summer programmes and then we realised that he probably wouldn't be and - er - we consoled ourselves thinking "well he's coming back, he'll be back in September, Dick'll be back, that's it... you know ...and in the meantime he'll want to be talked about constantly and missed" and you know, so we thought we'd do the best we can and we'll get people in Richards chair this week and have to wear badges of Richard and photos of Richard and presenters wearing his ties and all of that kind of thing. - (VERY UPSET) - As a kind of shrine, homage, erm, to him. Who, er, that it was always, that he was always coming back.

PRESENTER: (OVER CAROL): That he was going to come back...

CAROL: And obviously, we want, we still want, want him back. Erm... - (TEARY) - and that was sort of all with that intention. And, erm...

PRESENTER: As you say it's a family...

CAROL: It is a family you know *Countdown* ... (PRESENTER BUTTS IN) *Countdown* is a family. It's been all of us together all of these years, and Kathryn too and, erm, you know, he's such a... Richard is a... Richard, Richard is very special, very special person and, you know, over the years I've worked with lots of different people and there's only - as I often told him - there's only one Richard Whiteley! You know, he could do - he made us cry with laughter; every day we'd be in the studio and you'd roll your eyes at his

terrible jokes as only Richard can tell. And as the years went on he got happier and happier, you know. He was... he'd burst into the studio. He was such a happy man. And it makes it even more, you know, erm, it makes it even harder because he was one of life's fantastic, open, funny

PRESENTER: Fantastic, colourful character.

CAROL: He was - again, not just in his jackets! - he was colourful in all ways because I remember the first time I ever made a comment about his tie or his jacket, I think it was his jacket, at the time it was when I was just doing the Numbers game and he was mortified that anyone would think that he had bad taste in jackets! He was generally mortified, and that was Richard. He said: "You know you shouldn't say that I have bad taste in jackets, I don't. I wear the finest cloth!" and he did wear the finest cloth, just in the wrong colours! And, and, but, he grew to love all of that and I worked it out this morning 'cos I know he would've wanted me to, that in the studio, we must've had, actually *in* the studio audience, about a 1/4 million people have been in our studio audience over the years, and they have all fell in love with him.

PRESENTER: He had an amazing ability to connect with people.

CAROL: Oh he did. And the students! Cos *Countdown* is nearly 23 years old and often we had, in recent years, erm, a whole studio audience that was younger than *Countdown* itself! And he revelled in it. And they'd come in and the girls would have Richard Whiteley T-shirts printed up with his photo on and he loved that. He loved signing those particularly. And the boys would raid their dads wardrobe and they'd pick his - their dads - worst jackets and worst ties, and they'd come in and they'd be rows of them. All brushed their hair like Richard's, you know, on one side, and he thought that was hysterically funny. (UPSET): And, you know, they loved him, loved him. And on the websites this morning, and I know you [INDICATING YORKSHIRE TV] and *Countdown* and emails and cards and stuff, erm, from around the world, Duncan, around the world. Australia, Thailand, Cyprus where they watch him every day. Spain and New

Zealand and America and people remember him. Because at some point in their lives that have watched *Countdown* and when they were students, or when they've retired or if they worked shifts, or if they were ill. - (LAUGHS) - We'd used to joke about that, we'd say: "Ah, dear, ah, *Countdown*. People only watch it when they're ill!" It was another of his things, you know, he was on this intelligent gameshow and he managed to make it a show of three halves. The best bits were at the beginning - erm, erm, jokes only Richard could tell, he never had a catchphrase. We never won an award in 23 years which we actually loved, and, you know...

REPORTER: I think one thing today as we've seen, so many people smiling and remembering him with smiles. But there is a huge void left now...

CAROL: (SOBS)

REPORTER: ...there must be, in your life.

CAROL: (UPSET): Yeah there is. I don't know what we're gonna do really without Richard. (SOBS): To be honest.

REPORTER: He was a one in a million.

CAROL: He was a national treasure. And there aren't many - (SNIFFS) - there aren't many who have been on telly that are like that. And he was, erm, very special and we loved him very much. Very much. We all loved him.

REPORTER: He'll be very sadly missed...

CAROL: He will be sadly missed, but he's with us and, erm, you know, he fills a room and he's... he filled screens. For years and he just was loved. And we adored him. Adored the man.

REPORTER: Carol, thank you very much indeed...

CAROL: Thank you.

REPORTER: ...for talking to us today.

CAROL: Thank you.

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Carol Vorderman's Countdown Speech

Hello Countdowners.

I know were all in a state of shock about the very sad news about Richard. And, er, it's really odd to think that the many who has been here, the Mayor in the Chair for 23 years, won't be here anymore. Er, we miss him and we know that you miss him, because you've set us lots and lots of messages, thousands of messages from around the world, and we thank you for that. And, please keep them coming, they mean a lot to his family, and to us. And, er, the thing about Richard, well there are many things about Richard! But, er, he finished recording Countdown, in the final of our 53rd series, and there are still, er, five shows with the Boss in the chair that you haven't seen, and, er, we know that he'd want you to see them, er, in fact, he would be very upset if you didn't see them! So, er, please enjoy them, and please laugh at his jokes, er, enjoy this Countdown week, er, remember him as we remember him, and, er, the clock stopped too soon.

Watch Carol's interview...

You can watch Carol's interview with Calendar [here](#) but you will need [Real Player](#) to view the clip.

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