

TRIBUTES PAID IN BERKELEY

Hundreds mourn Roth at Mass

TRIBUNE News Report

BERKELEY — More than 1,000 mourners attended a Mass of Resurrection for Joe Roth here last night.

Many choked back tears as the white-draped coffin of the college football hero was carried from a campus chapel by a line of his University of California teammates.

"A lot of the games we play are pretty insignificant when you think of the game Joe was playing," his football coach, Mike White, told those attending a memorial Mass last night in the Roman Catholic Newman Hall.

Roth, 21, a top professional football prospect and a San Diego native, died in his campus apartment Saturday afternoon after waging a three-year battle against melanoma, a rare form of cancer.

Roth's roommate, John Matlock, described Roth as a young man with strong family ties who "sang off-key in the shower and made great meat loaf.

"He was everybody's friend," said Matlock in an unfaltering voice.

Roth was struck with a recurrence of the cancer two months ago. It had been thought he had successfully fought off the disease three years ago, while he was attending Grossmont College in San Diego.

He had played football as recently as Jan. 16, when he appeared in the Japan Bowl in Tokyo.

Private burial services were planned today in Jerome, Idaho, where Roth's parents now reside.

Roth's parents have asked that all donations be made to the Joe Roth Melanoma Fund, care of Dr. Michael Friedman, UC Medical Center, San Francisco.