

Sean's Story

By all accounts Sean was a typical 12 year old boy... except to those who knew and loved him. He was bright and thoughtful yet sweet and stubborn. He was wise beyond his years and had, as many say, an "old soul". He had a look in his eyes that said "I love you with all my heart"; a nod that said "I know where you're coming from"; and, a tilt of the eyebrows that said "Are you sure that's the best you can do?"



Unique...

Sean was a friend to all that he met but he didn't necessarily follow the crowd. While most kids would be content to eat pizza, ice cream and candy for every meal, Sean preferred steak, lobster, sushi, and vegetables. He was a natural leader and looked with excitement to the future. By the time he was 12, he had his college career planned.



... and yet, one of the guys

With his closest friends, he enjoyed playing chess, shooting hoops, passing the football, playing video games, and just hanging out. Among his favorite things to do with the guys were attending Dodger baseball games, going out to eat with friends, and having sleepovers. No matter what, his friends always knew they could count on Sean to be their friend.

Consummate Sports Fan

Sean spent several years playing organized sports, preferring flag football, which he played for several consecutive years.

When it came to sports, Sean was a like a walking encyclopedia of sports information and statistics, but there was no question where his loyalties laid: Duke Basketball, Georgia and Green Bay Packers football, and Dodger Baseball.



Dedicated Chess Player

Sean brought home a flyer for the chess team when he was five and two weeks later was at his first chess class. His talent combined with a determination to be his best resulted in a room full of trophies taller than he was! Among his chess accomplishments:



- 2002 California State 3rd Grade Champion
- 2003 Chess Fest 4th Grade Champion
- 2005 Western States 6th Grade Champion
- 2005 Super Nationals 25th Place & Captain of 2nd Place Team

The 2005 Super Nationals in Nashville, TN was only days after Sean had learned of his diagnosis with leukemia. Sean would not let his team down. He led the Meadows Elementary School to 2nd Place at Super nationals, finishing 25th among individually at the strongest players in the U.S. In his final game, he faced the highest-ranked 6th-grader in the country and hung on for 50 moves before he lost. No opponent of Sean's ever had an easy game. At 9 years old, Sean battled until midnight at an adult tournament in Las Vegas to finally beat a veteran adult player who had offered him a draw numerous times.

Legacy of Courage

Sean had an unceasing fight and determination whether it was playing sports, playing chess, or battling his toughest opponent, leukemia. After a long battle with leukemia, he spent the final four months of his life at Children's Hospital Los Angeles, taking his pills, shots, scans, operations, and situation with characteristic inner strength. When many kids would have given up – shunning needles, refusing pills – Sean continued his battle, without complaint. It was just what he had to do – part of the fight. He made the most out of every day of his life. He set an enduring example for children and grownups alike, including the doctors and the nurses who now remember him as a “champion and warrior.”



To everyone's disbelief, on August 14, 2006, Sean lost the battle with his toughest opponent, leukemia.

We all miss him more than words can say.