

Features



Nichols Receives 2nd Annual Kyle Smith Memorial Scholarship

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In 2022 on March 12th while covering the Final Four Basketball Championship in Springfield, Missouri the community lost a great sports writer. Kyle Smith was the Sports Editor of the Dexter Statesman and a contributor to SEMOBALL.com. He had a heart attack and passed away. He was my friend and mentor when it came to sports writing.

He was doing what he loved and that was covering Stoddard County sports. Kyle was at most every sporting event in the county and I spent a tremendous amount of evenings with him on the field or on the courts.

Kyle and I had a love for Diet Mtn Dew, Skittles and Twix Bars. We also ate a lot of hotdogs during football, volleyball, and basketball seasons. Many times we "fussed" over who got the left Twix or the Right Twix Bar!

Together with the Dexter Statesman Editor, Josh Ayers, we decided to keep Kyle's memory alive by creating a Memorial Scholarship to a Stoddard County Athlete. The first scholarship went to John Nimmo, Bernie Mules, in 2022, just a couple of week's after Kyle's passing. The last feature story Kyle wrote was about John and their run to the State Championship in basketball. It was printed after his passing.

Kyle loved girls and boys basketball. He would sit on the floor taking photos and try to help them win. If he caught the ball out of bounds, he'd say, "I put some mojo on that ball, now it will get into the basket." If they were at the free throw line he'd whisper, "get in there! We need those points."

If one of them would make a mistake or get swatted down, he'd simply say, "Oopsies!" Kyle was a quiet man, but he also had a funny side too.

We know Kyle would have been so excited to see the Bearcats win the Bloomfield Christmas Tournament, the SCAA Tournament, and most of all the first District Tournament in 19 years. He would have written some amazing feature articles on all of them.

And I can see him clearly rubbing his hands together and saying, "I smell a feature story!"

Kyle would have been proud to see, senior, Cole Nichols receive the 2023 Kyle Smith Memorial Scholarship! Along with this \$500 scholarship, Nichols received a Diet Mt. Dew and a "sharing" bag of Skittles!!

Nichols broke the record for most career points and was instrumental in helping the basketball achieve their district win.

Photo taken by Truman Krapf, Dexter High School senior basketball player.

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