

Features



Abbie Lloyd Receives the 2024 Kyle Smith Memorial Athletic Scholarship

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On March 12th of 2022 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 former 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. The second scholarship went to Cole Nichols of Dexter High School in 2023.

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 any Stoddard County team win, but especially his Bearcats. This year's scholarship went to a very deserving Bearcat, Miss Abbie Lloyd.

Lloyd is a three sport athlete playing cross country, basketball, and track/field; however she has excelled in track/field to earn a trip to the Missouri State High School Athletic Association's biggest event!

Just a few highlights from her athletic career at Dexter High School

- DHS varsity basketball point guard
- DHS cross country state qualifier three times
- DHS track and field sixth place State finish (pole vault) in 23'
- Current DHS pole vault record holder
- MSHSSA state qualifier seven times

Lloyd is a member of the National Honor Society, National Beta Club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Future Business Leaders of America, and Family, Career and Community Leaders of America regional officer.

Because of her outstanding accomplishments in sports, I can honestly say without a doubt Kyle would have written several feature stories about her athletic abilities and accomplishments. 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, Abbie Lloyd receive the 2024 Kyle Smith Memorial Scholarship! Along with this \$500 scholarship, Lloyd received a 6 pack of Diet Mt. Dew and a "sharing" bag of Skittles!! What we didn't know is that Abbie loves Skittles and eats them before every track meet! 'Skittles Power!'

Pictured are Dee Loflin, ShowMe Times, Lloyd, and former editor of the Dexter Statesman Josh Ayers.

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