

# Keeping his memory alive

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Tyson Piercy's family and friends have found a way to keep his memory alive year after year.

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Ted Piercy, holding Dotty's Cup, and Louise Piercy, holding a picture of her son Tyson, say the Tyson Piercy Memorial Scholarship Road Hockey Tournament gives them a chance to celebrate and remember their son.

This Saturday will mark the third annual Tyson Piercy Scholarship Road Hockey Tournament.

The event, which will take place in the parking lot of Fredericton High School, is a chance to remember Tyson, who died in a car accident in October 2007 at the age of 19.

It's also an opportunity for old friends to catch up and engage in some friendly competition, while raising money for a good cause.

Some of Tyson's closest friends, Nick Porter, Dylan Sullivan, Jared DeLong and Adam Ketch, have taken on the task of organizing the tournament each year.

Sullivan says holding a road hockey tournament seemed like a natural way to honour Tyson's life.

"We always played (road hockey) as kids, and even through high school," he says. "After Tyson's funeral a

lot of us came back to the house and had a get together. We saw the old road hockey nets and sticks and decided to play a game. It was a lot of Tyson's friends and family, and we all had this big road hockey game out in the street."

The first tournament was held in July 2008. Porter says he wasn't exactly prepared for the many components that went into organizing the day, but says so many people were willing to help out that everything worked out well.

"It all came together at the very end," he says. "None of us knew how it was going to go, but there was no shortage of people who wanted to be a part of it."

The money raised through the tournament goes toward a scholarship program. Each year, the Piercy family presents a scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 to a graduating Fredericton High School student about to enter a New Brunswick Community College program.

For Tyson's parents, Louise and Ted Piercy, witnessing the tournament for the past two years has been a heartwarming experience.

Louise Piercy says she couldn't believe it when she learned the event raised \$5,200 in 2008 and \$7,000 last year toward the scholarship. She says it's a reminder of how much Tyson was loved by his community.

"It makes us feel so good, and we can say, 'we're lucky we had him as long as we did,'" she says.

"Tyson knew so many different people. He played hockey right from five years old; he skied, he played

football, softball, road hockey. He had a few jobs along the way too."

"It was amazing how many people Tyson touched, and how many he knew," Ted Piercy adds. "He had a lot of connections. He did a lot in a short time."

Ted Piercy says holding the tournament every year allows Tyson's family and friends to keep his memory alive by sharing their stories about his life.

He says for him, the event has been an important part of the mourning and healing process.

"It gets us to talk more about him, and be more OK with him not being here," he says. "If you don't do things like this then nobody talks, they hold it inside, so when someone tries to talk about it later on, it hurts a lot more."

"We're going to keep doing (the tournament) as long as we can, as long as we get the support."

Delong says the tournament feels a bit like a reunion.

"There are people there who you don't see that much throughout the year, but then every year they keep coming back," he says. "For us to see that support, it's really overwhelming."

"I think it speaks to who (Tyson) was. He was really respected and well-liked by everyone."

After planning the tournament for the past two years, the organizers say they've worked out a lot of the kinks and, as long as they have good weather, this year's event should run smoothly.

Rain or shine, the games will start at 10 a.m. and wrap up around 6 p.m.

Twelve teams will be competing, and the winner will take home Dotty's Cup, a trophy named for Tyson's nickname.

Delong, Porter, Sullivan and Ketch are all playing on the same team. They say they haven't won the cup yet, but they're hopeful their luck will change this year.

"We're always in the top four," Porter says with a laugh. "You never know, this could be the year."

The event will also feature a barbecue, a raffle for a print of a painting by Tyson, who was a self-taught artist, and a 50/50 draw. Merchandise such as t-shirts and key chains will also be available to purchase.

Ketch says that since its inception, the event has already grown in leaps and bounds.

Every year hundreds of people stop by, and this year the number of teams that were able to compete had to be capped since there wouldn't be time to accommodate the number of people who wanted to play.

"It really has grown a lot since the beginning," Ketch says. "It just seems to keep getting bigger, with more people every year."

Louise Piercy says she sees the tournament as an example of something amazing coming out of a tragedy.

"It's a good thing coming from something that can really take you down," she said. "It helps us heal so much."

"This is really a positive thing that comes from something so drastically negative."

### **Fast facts**

**What:** The third annual Tyson Piercy Scholarship Road Hockey Tournament

**Information:** The tournament is held in memory of Tyson Piercy, and helps raise money for a scholarship in his name. This year, the tournament will begin at 10 a.m. on Saturday, July 17, and will run until about 6 p.m. In addition to the tournament, the event will include a barbecue, a raffle for a print of a painting by Tyson and a 50/50 draw.

**Contact:** Contact Louise and Ted Piercy at 458-5938 for more information



From left, Emily Jackson, the first winner of the Tyson Piercy Memorial Scholarship, drops the ball, as Jared Delong, Dylan Sullivan, Nick Porter, Jack Piercy and Adam Ketch prepare for a game of road hockey.