

My Dale

As 2 of my oldest and dearest friends, Bruno and Bob have known Dale and watched him grow as long as I have...I have asked for them to read what I want to say on my behalf.....I thank them for doing this for me

From the moment he was born I knew my little boy and I would be mates forever as well as father and son. I used to wake in the middle of the night and go and look at him in his cot...I loved watching him breathe.....and stroking his head...

I was lucky enough to have had him when I was young so that we basically grew up together. He was a daddy's boy and we enjoyed all those things that mummies aren't that into. I'd come home from night shift when he was 2 or 3 and get him out of bed at around 11.30 PM (much to his mother's dismay) and we would watch the wrestling on TV. We'd lie in the bean bag together and we'd practice the moves during the ads.....He loved it.....then back to bed for us both.....

As he got older and spent more and more time in the "boys club" he got to know a lot of my friends who are here today....we lived in Sydney for a couple of years and whenever the boys where in town we'd all go out for dinner and a few drinks and Dale would be right there with us.....He had a wicked sense of humour so they had to be on their toes because if an opportunity came up he would pounce and slip in the dig at their expense.....wonder where he got that from??

And of course I taught him all the vices...he could punt with the best of them...in fact one time in canberra he was on a work trip with me and we decided to take an extra day and go to the local race track.....Dale was 14 and we'd just bleached his hair because he decided he wanted the "surfy look" (that's another story...two blokes in the supermarket looking for hair colour!) anyway he began picking winners...and didn't stop...I think he out punted all of us that day.....unfortunately for him it was with my money and being underage he couldn't claim.....but I gave him \$50 for his efforts later on.....of course he thought he was worth more but I told him it was all part of his education....

I have a million memories of my beautiful boy...his smile, his laughter, his humour....I think he really liked what we used to call "pop jokes" even though he claimed otherwise...because he always seemed to use them himself at sometime....and I know he loved his nana very much....she looked after him during all his operations and treatments and I'm sure he drove her crazy many times but she never quit...I hope you are all lucky enough to have a nana like her.....

I was lucky enough to have him with me for the last 2 months of his life and he managed to hold on long enough to see my birthday through..... and during all that time it was just like the beginning....looking after him all over again....waking up in the middle of the night and watching him breathe.....and stroking his head again....

Before I finish I would like to pay a special tribute to my beautiful butterfly.....my partner Alison.....Alison had only known me and hence Dale for just on 12 months.....but she never ever wavered as things got gradually tougher and tougher at the end....nothing was ever too much trouble...she made Dales mum welcome at anytime and was the angel on my shoulder helping me through each and every day as we watched Dale slip away from us.....and she remains that angel for me now and into the future.....

And so a new beginning starts.....not an end for us....because Dale will always be with me forever...he was and is a part of me and I will talk about him and talk with him and remember him every day.....and I hope that all of you will do the same....he will be with us all forever.....

Thank youto all his friends for being here today to honour him and celebrate his life.

Shane/Mav Senior/Big Boxa