



Leon's Story

Courage, Determination, Inspiration

Leon Stone was 20 years old when he was diagnosed with Osteosarcoma on the 1st May 2011. A young farmer from Esperance, Leon was an avid sportsman and in his fourth year of a Bachelor of Agricultural Science & Commerce at the University of Western Australia. After a phenomenally courageous 12 month battle Leon sadly passed away on the 18th May 2012. Leon's passion was to promote awareness about Sarcoma, and in doing so touched many people across Australia.

Leon's wish was that young people of future generations would have a better chance than he did, so in the last months of his life he started his Facebook awareness page Stoneys Steps Against Sarcoma www.facebook.com/stepsagainstsarcoma.

Exert from Leon's Facebook Awareness Page "Stoneys Steps Against Sarcoma"

Walking into the orthopedic surgeons office my only fear was that I would miss the first few games of football because of a stress fracture. No one could have prepared me for the words that hit me next. Instead of telling me I had a stress fracture, I was told that I had cancer. Before I knew it I was staring at the ground, it seemed like seconds had taken minutes as I completely phased out. Then I heard the surgeon say "there is a good chance we can save your leg", that's when I came to it again. I just felt there was no way that at my age I could lose my leg, a country boy who grew up outside playing sports, could possibly lose a limb. The meeting continued and after roughly twenty minutes a stunned and gutted I walked out of the office and prepared myself for the several medical scans that day. I walked outside of his office and down the street towards Jacobs ladder where I had done so much running in the past few months. Accompanied by my sister I made the phone calls that people should never have to make to their parents. For the first time in several years as I told my parents, I began to cry. I just couldn't believe that I had cancer.

Exert The West Australian: Justin Langer Australian Tour West Indies 2011/2012

A day after meeting Leon, great Australian, and cricketer, Ricky Ponting, presented Matthew Wade with his first baggy green cap. In an inspirational address to the team, he encouraged Matthew to remember all those Australian men and boys out there who play club cricket, State cricket or even back yard cricket, and who dream of, but never get the chance to, pull on a baggy green cap. He also pointed up to the grandstands and talked of his meeting with Leon the day before. "

All of us remember that there is a young Australian up there, who loves cricket and who has decided that, when faced with the toughest question of his life, he wanted to travel across the world to watch us play cricket for our country." "Over the next five days, if you think things are getting tough, spare a thought for Leon Stone."

Without knowing it, Ricky Ponting not only provided the Australian cricket team with some inspiration but also left us all with some ardent advice.

In the short period I have known Leon, he has been an inspiration. He is scared; you can see it in his eyes, but who wouldn't be?

He has talked to me about the fear of the unknown, probably the greatest fear for us all, and how he will miss his family and friends more than anything else.

Leon Stone will never wear a baggy green cap or have the same impact as the late and great Jim Stynes has had on all of Australia, but he is no less of a hero. To his family and friends there could be no greater hero because through his actions he has taught us about living in the face of adversity, with a smile on his face and a determination in his soul.

Thanks Leon Stone.

JL (full article <http://www.justinlanger.com.au/index.php/Articles-Inspiration/Inspiration/Meeting-Leon-Stone.html>)



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