

Randy Miller

It is with deepest sorrow that I write this note.

Due to a commitment to our National Bowling Association concerning the realignment of our organization, I am not here today to celebrate Randy's life with you. After much thought of canceling my trip to Texas for this meeting, I decided that Randy would have probably wanted me to do what was for the betterment of the sport that he so loved. Therefore, I have asked to have this read at this service.

Randy first started bowling at Al-Mar when he was a young boy. I remember his excitement when he first learned to hook it a little. He had an early passion for bowling and as he grew older he became one of the better local bowlers. Randy was on the Bowling Green High School bowling team my first year as the coach, and was on our first championship team his Senior Year, 1998. By the time Randy was a senior he could out-hook anyone on the team and probably the league. Most of the team would move a board or 2 left as the matches went on and the lanes started to break down. Randy made his lane adjustments by moving a step or two left.

Randy tried football for a while and I even had tried to convince him that he should stick with that and maybe get a scholarship, but his love was bowling and dirt bikes, football was only something to watch. Randy loved the Lions. I think he and I were the only Lions fans at Al-Mar (or maybe anywhere for the past few seasons).

When Randy first moved up to a men's league, he bowled on my team. He was one of the first of my high school bowlers to move up and it was sure great bowling with my son Chris and Randy, watching them grow as bowlers and young men.

Randy was probably the strongest bowler that I have ever seen. He several times, threw his ball so hard that pins flew into the next lane and knocked down pins there also. Randy might have been the first to have over 300 for a game by knocking pins down on multiple lanes with one shot.

I remember his excitement when he had his first 800 series, his first year in a men's league, and later that same season, his first 300 game. Randy also had the first 800 series in the new Al-Mar on December 12, 2001 and a 299 later that same season. As a bowler Randy was well on his way to the Hall of Fame. At only 24 years old he had a 300, 2-299's and 2- 800's.

I'm sure that Randy is upstairs right now looking for a really competitive league where he can show off his stuff.

Back to football, Randy was a great athlete. I really don't know how tall he was or what he weighed, but you all know that he was a very big guy. He was amazingly quick and had a vertical leap that I'm sure would allow him to dunk a basketball. I remember Randy in our back yard one year playing football with some of the other young guy's that were at our house for an employee picnic. There was a high school baseball player and my son Chris who was a high school runner and neither could catch Randy. He could throw a football like Bobby Layne and made several leaping one handed catches that would probably make ESPN plays of the Week.

I remember at Josh Earl's graduation party, Mitch Bakies, a fairly quick guy was for some reason chasing Randy all over the yard without any success. Randy finally stopped and asked Mitch, "What would you do if you ever caught me".

Randy loved to go watch his friends play baseball and one Sunday, my son Chris and Blake Wise, were playing at the high school and needed another player to prevent a forfeit. They put Randy out in right field where he proceeded to chase a ball down at the fence and threw a strike to home to cut down an unknowing runner at the plate. And that was without even one warm-up toss after several years of not playing at all.

As Randy's boss there was a rare occasion when he would need a little encouragement, like the time he was throwing 2 balls at a time after league one night. In that case, it was encouragement to stop before he broke something, or had every kid in town trying to imitate him.

I have rambled on about Randy the athlete but there was much more to Randy than his athletic ability. He was a great young man, soon to be a college graduate, a great employee, and a role model for many of the younger high school bowlers. I can really never remember Randy complaining about life, work, school, or anything else. This past summer he worked four jobs to save money for school. He just seemed to roll with the punches and was always in a good mood. He loved working with the younger bowlers and volunteered much of his time to help with the High School Team during practice.

Randy you were like a second son to me and I am very proud of the way you lived your life. I hope that sharing some of these memories will make it a little easier for us to celebrate Randy's life as we mourn his passing.

I am very proud to have been Randy's friend and teammate, although you are gone you will never be forgotten.

Bill Wammes

P.S. Stay off the trampolines.