



Rhys Donald Schmitz

13th January 1995 -

Passed peacefully on 19th December 2023

Today we gather, our heart's heavy with sorrow, our souls seeking solace to honour and remember a life that was cut short in duration but infinite in its impact.

A life that was a beacon on light in our world the life of Rhys Schmitz.

Rhys was born at Norfolk Island hospital on 13th January 1995 as Kay Evans, yelled out to Aunty Jude "it's a Boy". At the same time Smitty came running around the corner excited, hands in the air repeating what Kay said so the whole island could hear.

Rhys was larger than life starting school on Norfolk Island before moving to New Zealand in 2011. Rhys was a good kid at school just doing his thing and was never a drama, however if the surf was good, you would find him out the reef before school, but on occasions time may have got the better of him not returning to school until lunch, receiving detention for the week but to Rhys it was well worth it.

Rhys loved playing football at breaks, but he used to get so dirty he would be sent out of class to clean himself up before returning. Rhys was cheeky but all the teachers loved him.

Rhys loved his sports playing tennis, squash, rugby league and on occasions netball. Rhys took his passion for sport to the next level, representing Norfolk Island in rugby league and tennis.

In 2008 Rhys was selected to represent Norfolk Island in India for the Commonwealth Youth Games, however due to injury Rhys was unable to compete. Rhys still left Norfolk with the team, stopping in at Sydney to have hip surgery. He was gutted but showed so much resilience and courage at such a young age and refocused on getting better for the next competition.

Later Rhys developed a passion for boxing. There was no wonder why Rhys was so good at boxing, he was strong and could pack a punch. I think Smitty can vouch for that, being his sparring partner walk/crawling out of the gym after every session.

One of Rhys many victories was winning the Queensland Novice Champs, but what made Rhys a great boxer was his fighting spirit and passion.

Rhys was one of the founding members of Norfolk Island Boxing Association. This was one of his greatest achievements receiving a letter from The International Boxing Association gaining full membership to the IBA, this would have allowed Rhys to participate in the South Pacific games held in the Solomons Island. Rhys passion for boxing has inspired the younger generation to achieve greatness.

Rhys was a family man always caring and loving. Rhys became a big brother in 1997 with his mum (Mel) allowing Rhys to name his brother. Only after a few days Rhysy thought Jamie looked hungry so Rhys thought he would feed Jamie tiny teddies, Rhys, always sharing.

Rhys is the big brother to five other siblings Conor, Zac, Telanie, Jessie and Tyla. He loved his brothers and Sisters and was their protector always holding them in family photos but over everything he was their mentor, their beacon. Even though Rhys is not here in a physical presence he will always be there to guide you through life.

Rhys and Kell shared a special bond together, Rhys loved training in the gym with Kell and visiting their favourite holiday destination at Maleny.

Rhys loved Kelly's family Taylah, Connor and Jai and took them in as his own. Soulmates will always end up together, no matter how much love got lost along the way, no matter how much distance, you lose each other to find each other again.

Rhys had a true connection with the ocean if it was out fishing with his dad winding in that big trumpeter, to camping out Philip with his mates, going for a surf or just taking Lola down the beach. The ocean was Rhys's grounding. He was like an island in the sea separated on the surface but connected on the deep.

Rhys was a true gentleman even in the last few weeks he stilled loved and thought of everyone else and consistently told others they were loved.

As we draw this eulogy to a close, I want to express my deepest gratitude for the time we were blessed to share with Rhys. Their presence in our lives brought immeasurable joy, love, and laughter and for that we are forever grateful. As Rhys would say "Every time you smile, you're a winner."

Rest easy myse mate.

NOTICES

SWIMMING LESSONS will re-commence in January 2024.

Learn to swim, Stroke Correction and Toddlers/Babies (6mths+).

Wednesday afternoon and Saturday morning classes available. Bookings essential.

Please contact Kylie via email for further details – umlauft@ninet.nf



Thank You

Rhys Schmitz's loved ones Kelly Q, Shane, Melissa and families would like to sincerely thank everyone who helped Rhys and the family during these past weeks.

The Norfolk Island Hospital staff, the staff at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and those involved in the medivacs for the love and care shown to Rhys and his family.

Thank you to the surfing community for the beautiful Paddle Out that honored Rhysy so perfectly. Donald & George for taking the family out on the glass bottom boats during the tribute. Also, Kit for capturing this incredible experience.

Shane and all the grave diggers, Mal & the works depot team, the wreath makers, mound decorators, Gaye and all those who provided flowers. Uncle Leonard for taking Rhys on his last drive. The friends and brothers who were pallbearers and with Rhys from the beginning of his fight right up until the end. The NIASA and the NI Pacific Games team for the guard of honour. Jodie and Toni & Desire from PhotoPress for the service sheets, Trent for the music, Michelle & the livestream crew, Alexi for the escort, Tim for leading the service, Jo, Ernie & the Elliot family for providing the wreath making and wake venues and everyone else that came to support the family in farewelling Rhys at his service.

Special thanks to NI Connect and everyone who has offered and given support, love, care, meals and other essentials to Rhys and the family at such a difficult time. Also, thank you to Brogan and everyone that generously donated to the GoFundMe.

Finally, we would like to say a huge thankyou to "Team Rhysy". Those who came to Brisbane despite the cost and time and those who joined us on Norfolk once Rhys returned home. Rhys was aware and overwhelmed with the amount of people he touched. Even though we didn't get the outcome we all desperately wanted, the love and support for Rhys and each other was incredible.

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