

By Ian Dillow

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For those of you who don't know me, my name is Ian Dillow and I'm one of Zach's close friends. I can remember the exact moment we met like it was yesterday. Standing in line in my kindergarten class I looked across the hall, saw Zach doing the same, and said "let's be friends". Now whether or not that's actually how it went is up for debate, however it's clear that Zach and I were going to be lifelong friends.

There are many things that I truly admire about Zach. One of which being his passion for everything he did, especially baseball. I played baseball with Zach ever since I could remember and one thing I can definitely remember is, well let's just say his "outbursts of passion" on the field. During a playoff baseball game, Zach and I were playing against each other for a chance to go to the league championship. It was coming down to the last inning, tied game, with a runner on second. A ball was hit right to Zach at short, he fielded it, gathers himself and throws it to first. However, the first baseman missed it, letting the winning run come home. Now at this point, Zach and I had been great friends for many years but as I went up to him to say good game he used some vocabulary that I probably shouldn't repeat in here. Now if you were watching from a far, it would seem as if Zach hated the game of baseball. But his many, we can call them "moments" on the field were not a display of anger or sadness but rather true passion for the game he loved.

Baseball was one of Zach's many loves which is interesting because baseball has many rules and Zach seldomly cared about the rules. Now after it had all ended I realized that your middle school grades aren't as important as they seem. However, Zach seemed to have already learned this lesson which he most likely got from Mr. Porter. At this point we were at the end of our 8th grade year and the entire grade was watching a movie in the gym. Zach and I being the impatient 8th graders we were, left the gym to go explore. We found ourselves getting a drink of water when one of the more "spiteful" teachers who Zach had many run-ins with in the past, saw us and ordered us back into the gym. Zach obviously didn't take too kindly to this and after about 5 minutes of sitting in the gym he turns to me and goes "how about we get another drink". We head back to the water fountain when the same teachers catches us and sends us to the principal's office. Now I had never been to the office before and was truthfully very nervous, mainly because of what I thought my parents would do to me. But as I sat there shaking, I looked over at Zach and he had the biggest smile on his face without a care in the world. Instantly, my nerves were settled as Zach and I bursted out in laughter. The principal walks out and asks us why we were here, I told him the reason, he looks at us and asks us if we had learned our lesson. I wanted to get out of there as fast as I could

so I quickly say yes, but Zach being Zach, and with a huge smile on his face looks him dead in the eyes and says “nope.”

Zach always argued against the rules and fought regulations. I believe this was due to his high level of intelligence. It was obvious that Zach was extremely smart which he undoubtedly got from his parents. He was not only book smart but he showed his intelligence outside school as well. His witty comments to his friends and to our parents as well always brought a smile to my face. Although Zach was smarter than most of the people in the room he rarely showed it. He was extremely humble and never used his intelligence to make anyone feel lesser about themselves. Now I'd be lying if I said Zach never used his intelligence to have a little fun with us. There were a number of times when we would all be together and one of us would say something, I guess the best word for it would be “stupid”. Zach being smarter and far more mature than all of us would just look at us, shake his head with that little grin as if to say “I love you guys but man do you say some dumb stuff”.

Although Zach and I were the same age, I always looked up to him. The passion he had for everything he did, his care free persona, incredible intellect, a kind and caring heart, and an unbreakable sense of loyalty to the people he cared about were just a few of his amazing qualities. He always wanted the best for everyone, even if that meant sacrificing something of his own. Zach you have done more for me than anyone could ever ask for and you have been the son, brother, and friend that I strive to be. I love you man