

Ali Valdrighi is a graduate of Pomona College and is attending University of Nebraska College of Medicine Fall 2015. She swam for 4 years with the Pomona-Pitzer swim team and participated in the Hour of Power each year.

Ted Mullin 'Hour of Power' Relay: a Swimmer's Perspective

The Ted Mullin *Leave it in the Pool Hour of Power* tradition was brought to Pomona-Pitzer swimming by our head coach, Jean-Paul Gowdy, when he transferred from Wheaton College. As an incoming freshman, I was introduced to a multitude of new experiences, but the *Hour of Power* stands out clearly in my mind. Reflecting now as a recent graduate, this event remains one of my favorites. Nothing brings a team closer together than spending an hour racing, listening to music, eating cookies during the “sugar fuel break” and most importantly, raising awareness and money for cancer research.

As a rather clueless freshman, the *Hour of Power* seemed like just another fun workout designed to build team unity and individual motivation. I now realize it is so much more. Ted Mullin (1984-2006) was an inspiring, perseverant, talented young adult who is dearly missed. Ted was a history major and swim team captain at Carleton College but was prevented from completing his final season because of the recurrence of synovial cell sarcoma—a rare form of cancer.

Ted began swimming at the age of 13, played trumpet in the high school jazz band and was an Illinois State Scholar. Spring of his college sophomore year, a malignant tumor was discovered behind his right knee interrupting his swimming and studies at Carleton College. From June to November, he underwent chemotherapy, radiation and surgery and then returned to campus until the disease was found spread to his lungs at the end of his junior year requiring more chemotherapy and lung surgeries. Despite all of these challenges, he still served as swim team co-captain. After a courageous two year battle, Ted died September 3, 2006 and the legacy of *Hour of Power* was born November 7, 2006 at the Carleton College Swim and Dive team (and Ted's) home pool. The *Hour of Power* was a chance for Ted's teammates to turn the pain of this great loss into something positive; they could literally leave their grief “in the pool” as they raised awareness and took action. This event to celebrate and commemorate Ted's life became a vehicle to improve the lives of many others.

For me, my Pomona-Pitzer Sagehen teammates, and teams across the country, this event is an opportunity to reflect on the pain and wreckage caused by cancer. Yet, it is also the chance to mitigate future suffering; it is a chance to provide people struggling with cancer opportunities that were not available to Ted Mullin. As the Ted

Mullin t-shirt bluntly states, "Cancer Sucks." Hopefully, the *Hour of Power* will make cancer "suck" a little less for future generations.

Funds raised from the *Hour of Power* support pediatric sarcoma research at the University of Chicago Medicine Comer Children's Hospital. Collegiate, high school, club, master or any other interested swim, dive or dryland teams are all invited to participate. Basically, put a team together and bring your positive energy to support an incredible cause. In 2014, 183 teams participated. The tenth annual *Hour of Power* will be officially held on November 10, 2015; however, teams may participate on any day that works best with their schedules. Registration opens on August 1, 2015! For more information visit

http://apps.carleton.edu/athletics/varsity_sports/mens_swimming_and_diving/hour_of_power_relay/. More information about the Ted Mullin fund can also be found at <http://tedmullinfund.org>. Still contemplating action? A video packing all the punch of *Brian's Song* into six minutes is not to be missed <http://tedmullinfund.org/vids/tedhp.html>.