

Charity festival in musician's memory

MUSIC EVENT: Battle against weather won in raising £5,300

By Laurence Cawley

ORGANISERS of a festival arranged in memory of popular musician Lee Dunford told how they battled the rain and notched a victory for charity.

Now in its fourth year, LeeStock was held at the White Horse pub in Sudbury at the weekend in memory of the town's Lee Dunford, who died in 2006 following a battle with Hodgkin's disease.

After his death his close friend Edd Keogh and his brothers Matt and Peter, all of Sudbury, organised a charity concert to raise cash for the Willow Foundation charity, founded by former Arsenal and Scotland goalkeeper Bob Wilson and his wife Megs, to provide special days for seriously ill 16 to 40-year-olds.

For the first time this year, organisers of the two-day festival decided to stage it outside – only to find they had an ongoing fight on their hands against the rainy weather.

However, with the help of the pub the festival managed to get through all of the planned acts by moving some performances inside the pub.

Matt Keogh said: "Saturday was a stunning day right up until about 8pm when it started to pour down and it became too dangerous for our two headline acts to perform on the stage.

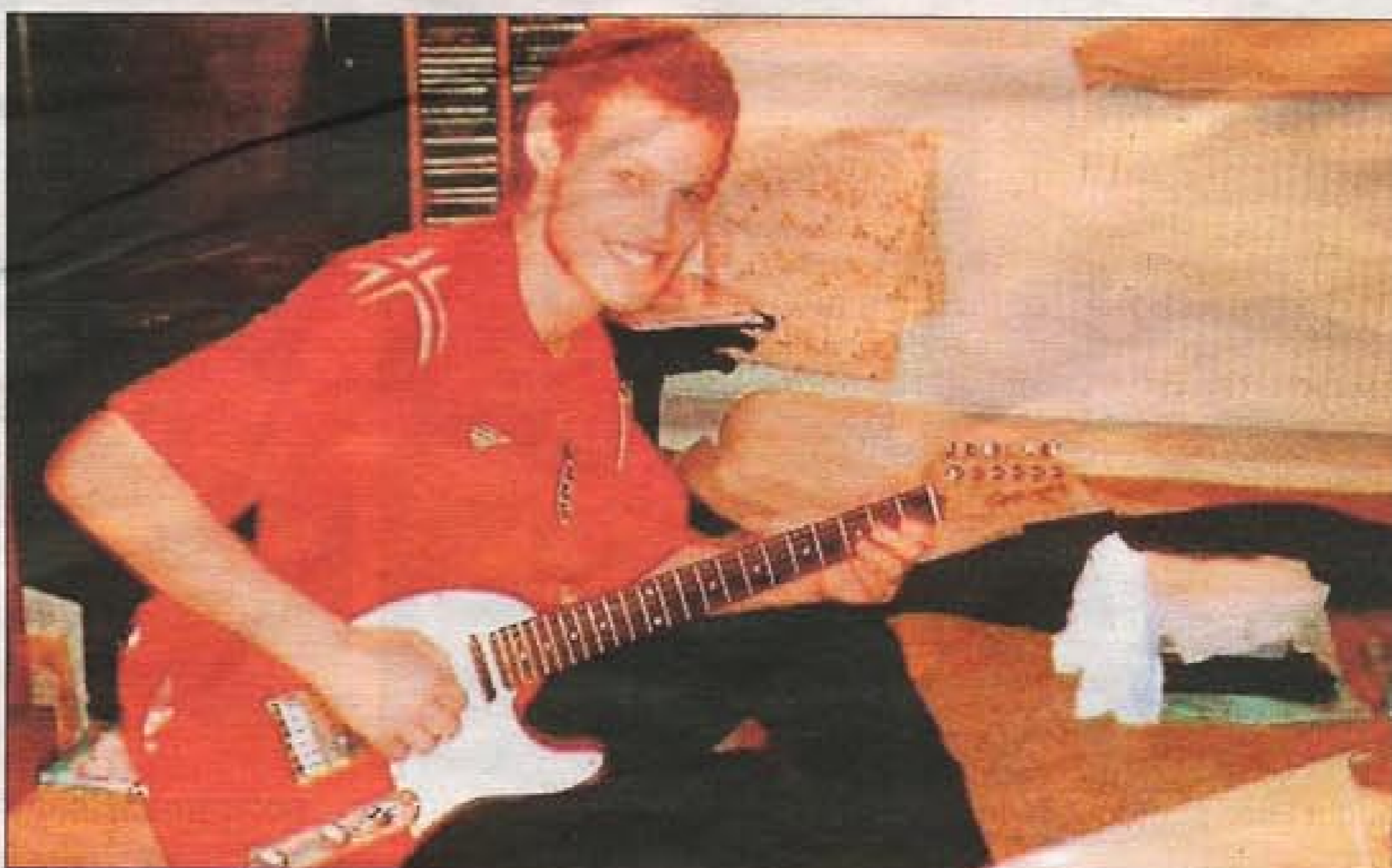
"We then went inside and everybody was able to play. And on the Sunday the rain meant we started later and went on later. We are hoping to raise about £5,300 – it is money that makes a real difference to a relatively small charity foundation.

"It is the first time we have brought the festival outside – and I think overall we have won the battle with the weather. We are delighted and really grateful to everybody who has supported us."

Diagnosed with Hodgkin's Lymphoma aged 17, Mr Dunford underwent four-and-a-half years of bone marrow transplants and chemotherapy before his death.

His special day, provided by the Willow Foundation in 2005, was a dream come true – visiting Slap Studios in Brixton, London, to record a track and staying overnight at the five-star Grosvenor Hotel with friends. A CD of this year's performers is available for £5 – which goes to charity – from matt@leestock.org

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IN LEE'S MEMORY: LeeStock organisers at the White Horse pub in Sudbury. Left: Lee Dunford, who died aged 17

Photos: PHIL MORLEY and CONTRIBUTED