

Classmates,

It is with a heavy heart that I pass news of '96 losing a classmate.

Shannon Willits passed away unexpectedly over the weekend. Jake Zissu relays from a post Shannon's wife, Tara:

"As many of you know, while at a Strongman competition with Gabby and I in Georgia last Saturday, Shannon suddenly passed away mid competition. We still don't know the exact cause, but we lost an amazing father, husband, son, brother, coach, friend, competitor and just an astounding giant of a man. People have reached out from across the US with incredible stories of how he has impacted their lives. From high school buddies to Navy classmates, sailors under his command to current coworkers, guys he wrestled or met in the Crossfit community or laughed with in Strongman, everyone has a wonderful Shannon story.

He was truly larger than life (and that's pretty large!), you instantly felt like you had known him forever and he cared more deeply than anyone will ever know. He was always looking to help, make a joke, pass on a funny meme or just check in on you. He was the strongest man (in many ways) you would ever have known, a stellar role model and cheerleader for his daughter and the partner in life that I was so blessed to have. My giant protector.

So remember him with a smile and a good story, and pray for all those he left behind."

As many of you saw on the facebook page, there are many stories about what a great man he was. He will be missed.

If you are in the Jacksonville area, I believe there is a service scheduled on 10 April. If I hear more details on wishes of the family, I will pass them along.

Nagel Sullivan

