Local baseball star loses battle with brain cancer

By SHANNA MCCORD

SANTA CRUZ — Nick Doan, a father of two young children and once a standout baseball player at Santa Cruz High School and Cabrillo College, lost his battle against brain cancer a day after turning 34.

The Santa Cruz native, who received the cancer diagnosis in May 2010, died Dec. 20.

Doan, a 1998 Santa Cruz graduate, pitched for the Cardinals and Cabrillo College. He went to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo on a full scholarship in 2002-03.

Known for his old-school high leg kick while pitching for the Cardinals, Doan played after college with the Santa Cruz Mets in the San Francisco Amateur Baseball Association.

SANTA CRUZ HIGH’S NICK DOAN fields a ground ball during a game in May 1998. Doan died of brain cancer last week.

DOAN

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Jose men’s league and he played softball in the Santa Cruz recreational league alongside his older brother Ryan Doan.

The brothers also spent the summer of 2001 playing semiprofessional baseball in Karlstuga, Sweden.

Doan helped the Cardinals win the Santa Cruz Coast Athletic League title in 1998 and helped the Cabrillo Sea-hawks take the Coast Conference North Division title in 2001.

He returned to the area and coached at Scotts Valley High before returning to his alma mater to serve as an assistant coach.

“He had quite the accolades,” Ryan Doan, 36, said. “He could basically do it all, hit or pitch. He had this amazing instinct on the baseball field.”

Doan underwent surgery to remove an orange-sized tumor from his frontal lobe in June 2010 along with radiation and chemotherapy treatments. He resumed life thinking the cancer was gone for almost three years.

However, in April, Doan started having trouble with his speech and discovered the cancer had returned. This time the cancer attacked the center of his brain, which essentially made it non-operable, Ryan Doan said.

Doan spent the last several months undergoing aggressive radiation and chemotherapy in addition to vitamin C infusions to help fight the cancer.

Doan and his wife Kate have two young children, Cali, 5, and Hudson, who was born in March.

Scotts Valley resident Jordan Bergstrom became close friends with Doan while teammates at Cabrillo. The two were also competitors as Bergstrom, a graduate of San Lorenzo Valley High School, played baseball at San Jose State, a Cal Poly opponent.

“He was one of my best friends right off the bat at Cabrillo,” Bergstrom, 33, said. “We kept our friendship throughout, even when we played against each other. “I feel like I lost a broth-

NICHOLAS DOAN

BORN: Dec. 19, 1979
DIED: Dec. 20, 2013
EDUCATION: Santa Cruz High School, Cabrillo College and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

CAREER: Family’s construction business, David Doan Construction

SURVIVED BY: Mother Loree Doan; brother Ryan Doan; wife Kate Doan; children Cali and Hudson

SERVICES: Noon Jan. 4 at Holy Cross Catholic Church, 126 High St., Santa Cruz; Celebration of life barbecue immediately follows the memorial service at Santa Cruz High School baseball field

SEE DOAN ON C3

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