

## Honouree Biography - Derek Schefold



*photo - Derek and Holly on their wedding day.*

**Birthday:** May 25, 1975

**Family:** Wife - Holly

**Favourite colours:** green

**Favourite sports:** tennis, extreme Frisbee, hockey, golf

**Favourite book:** *Wayne Gretzky's Autobiography*

**Favourite food:** Chicken or anything that tastes like chicken

**Occupation:** Advertising Executive

Derek is an active young man who lives life to the fullest. He and Holly, his wife of a year and a half, had just purchased their first home when they received news that would change their lives forever. Derek had been experiencing occasional night sweats for a number of months but thought nothing of them as they were very sporadic. One day a co-worker noticed a lump on Derek's neck and from then his concern grew. In May 2003 Derek underwent a number of examinations including an ultrasound, biopsy and

CAT scan. At the end of the month, only days after his 28<sup>th</sup> birthday, Derek's doctor gave him a diagnosis of stage 2 Hodgkin's disease\*. This came as a huge shock to Derek and his family. Up until this point in his young life, he had always enjoyed excellent health, an abundance of energy and dreams of an unlimited future.

Derek was advised that, if possible, he should take a leave of absence from work as there is no way to predict how he will be affected by the chemotherapy. On June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2003 Derek began his chemotherapy treatments as an outpatient at McMaster University Medical Centre. He is scheduled to have 8 chemotherapy treatments spread out over a period of 16 weeks, followed by a month of radiation. At this point, Derek has only just begun his journey back to good health with his first few treatments. One of his treatments had to be cancelled because his white blood cell count was too low. Although this setback, along with numerous side effects such as hair loss and mouth sores, has dampened his spirits a bit he remains positive and optimistic about the whole process.

In this troubling time, his wife Holly is focusing her energy in a positive way and is committed to raising over \$7,000 for The Leukemia Research Fund of Canada. She had completed her first marathon last fall and is now training to run the Chicago Marathon in October 2003. Having Derek there at the marathon finish line to cheer her on will be especially meaningful as she will be supporting him in his own race for life. This is one more journey in Derek and Holly's lives that they will take together.

\* Hodgkin's disease accounts for 15 % of all lymphomas and 1% of all cancers. Most commonly, it affects young adults between the ages of 15 and 35. Hodgkin's disease has an excellent recovery rate and can be cured with successful treatments.