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Bruins score with fans at celebrity event

By Steve LeBlanc
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF



ASHLEY HUTCHESON / SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

PARK IT: Hall of famer Brad Park signs a Bruins flag during the night's autograph session.

Hockey fans hungry for a little taste of Beantown got their fill at Rattlesnake Point Golf Club Tuesday night.

Best known for their successes with the 1970s Boston Bruins, former teammates and Hockey Hall of Famers Brad Park and Gerry Cheevers headed up this year's guest list at the fifth annual Milton Chamber of Commerce Sports Celebrity Dinner and Auction.

And as expected, the duo took plenty of shots at some old adversaries — with the lion's share of that good-natured ribbing directed at their chief rivals, the Montreal Canadiens.

"Ken Dryden, man I hated that guy," quipped Cheevers, the ultimate 'clutch' goalie of his era and creator of the highly recognizable stitch-laden mask. "The next time he runs (for political office) I hope he loses by one vote. No offence really, but we just never beat the Canadiens."

Added Park, "God I hated Guy Lafleur. How could you punch anyone named 'The Flower'?"

Assuming keynote speech duty for a crowd of roughly 280, Park — one of the premier defencemen of his day and a standout during the epic 1972 Canada-Russia Summit Series — dished out comical jabs at everyone from his adopted homeland's president, George Bush, to his Bruins' new towering blueliner.

"We've got this six-foot-nine guy (Zdeno Chara) back there who accidentally runs into people and couldn't pass it through a house. Ottawa must be loving it."

Canada hockey guru Don Cherry and Team Canada cohort Bobby Clarke were also on his verbal hit list, as was his old stomping ground of Scarborough — which he characterized as Canada's Iraq.

Using his charisma on one female attendee in an effort to boost live auction bidding earlier in the night, Park took a page from David Letterman's repertoire to close out his address.

Far more serious during his brief banter with evening emcee Gord Stellick — of Fan 590 fame — Cheevers talked about his surprise at being drafted by the Bruins instead of his hometown Maple Leafs and remorse over not playing in the Summit Series.

He also admitted at least one shortcoming in regards to his 1980s coaching tenure in Boston.

"I probably ruined him, throwing him to the wolves like
• see EVENT on page B6

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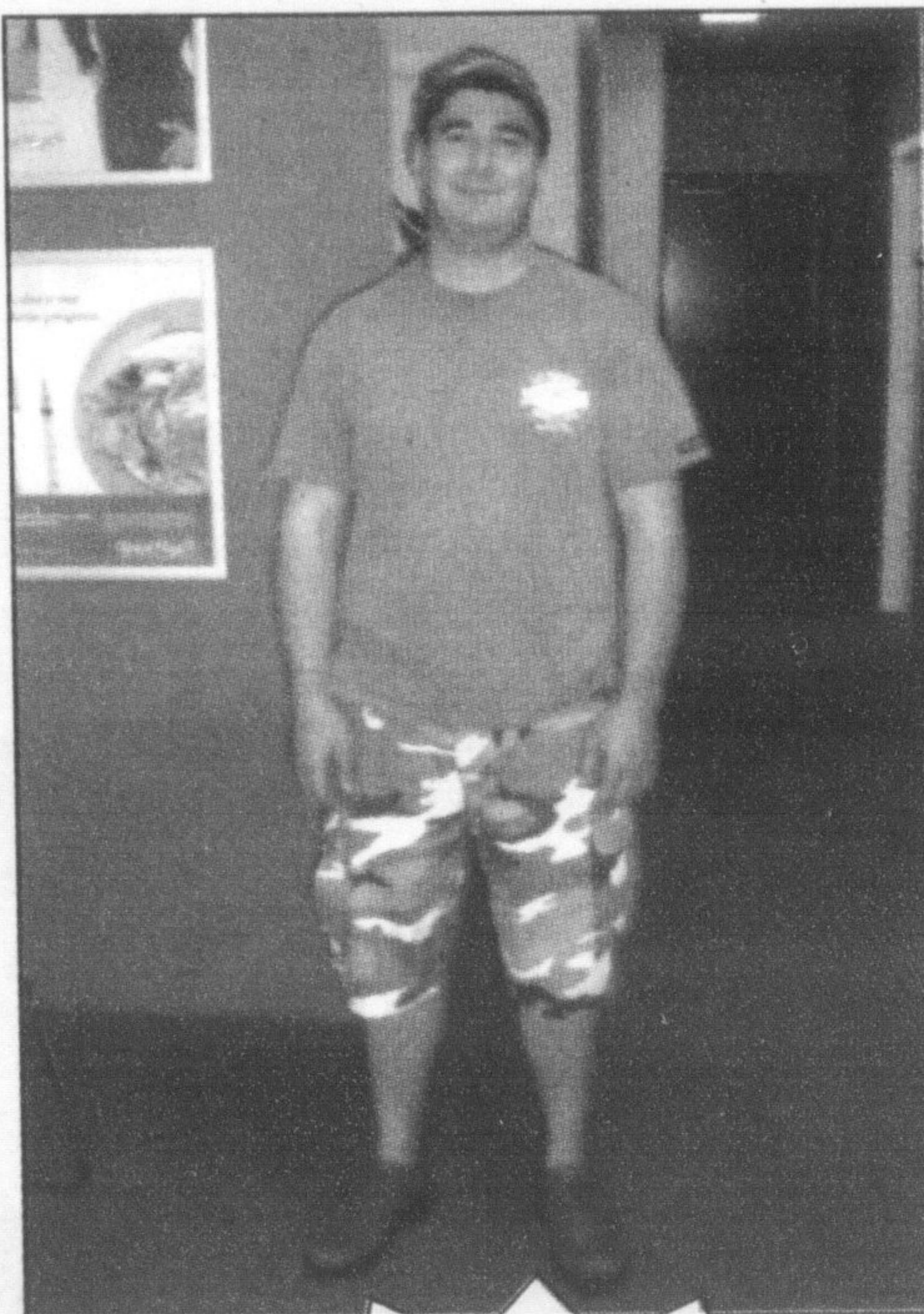
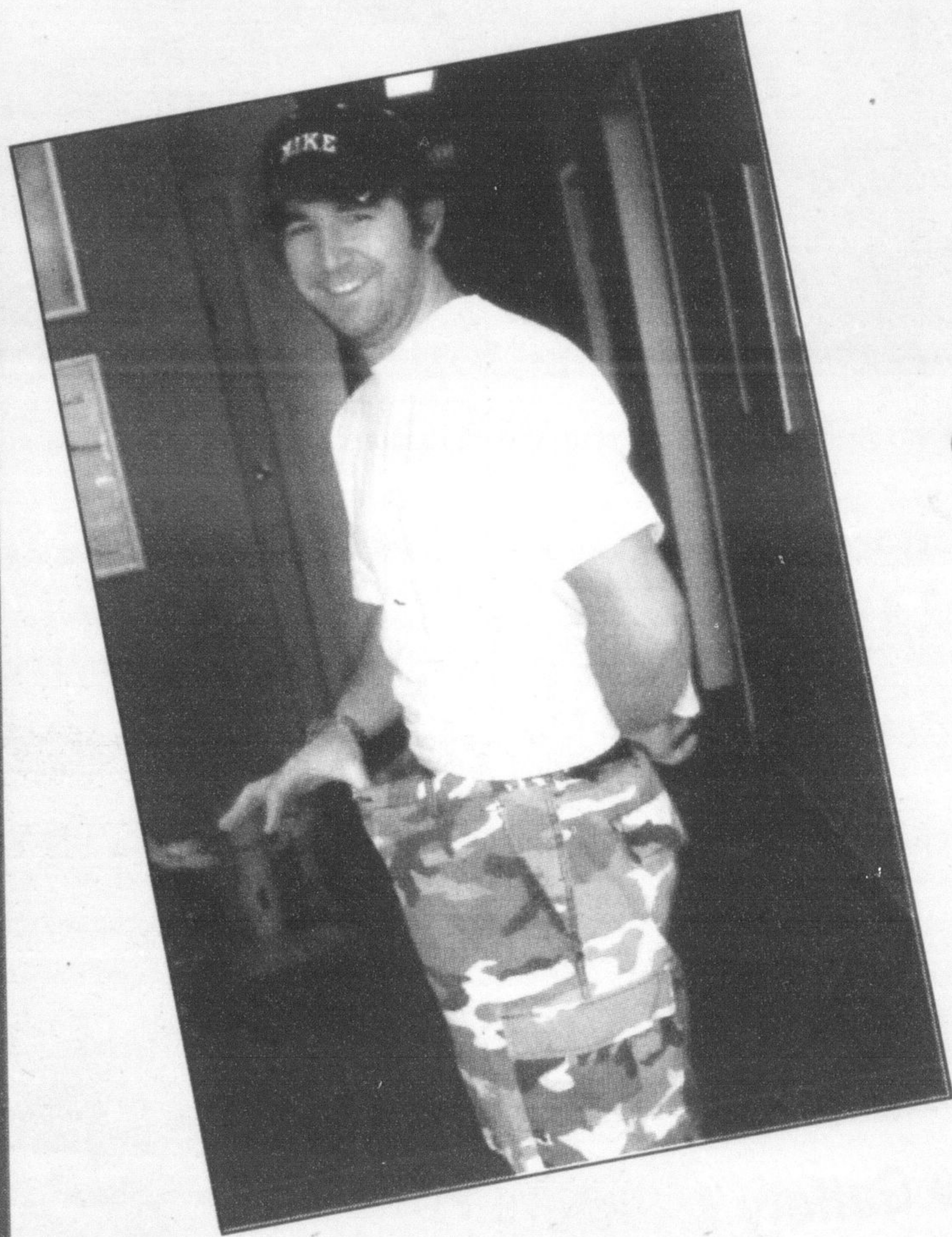
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