



## VALE MALCOLM HEARD



An Olympian in 1960, Malcolm Heard “six foot five” – played Basketball for Australia in Rome, then again in 1962 at the World Championships in Manila. In 1964 and '65, he won the “Woolacott Medal” for Basketball, (equivalent to the “Brownlow Medal” in AFL) – a significant achievement. Malcolm helped to raise 2 children (with his wife Jo, who is a “Pom”) and had 3 grandchildren. He had 3 brothers, all of whom have been prominent sportsmen. One was in the 1960 Olympics also, and then subsequently captained the Australian team.

Malcolm got into tennis when he was “talked into filling in” for his brother’s team. He would hit a ball against the Church wall for hours, which probably accounted for his excellent consistency. He always planned to “beat the wall one day.” One of his highlights was watching Jack Kramer’s professionals from the stands at Memorial Drive, Adelaide. Mal’s tennis was mostly played on hard courts, but he gave it away when he had work to do in establishing a home for his family. Tennis was his favourite sport as a young man, but he chose Basketball because he could play it at night, and not clash with family activities.

His love for tennis was re-ignited when he joined the Vets in the mid-nineties, and he still played many tournaments both with and against his friend, Norm Coventry. It was Norm who initiated Mal’s involvement with Australian Vets in Wodonga 1999. What a red hot start! Mal was a Finalist in 2001, and it made him wish that he had started earlier. He and Norm also won several medals at the Masters Games over the years. In October 2010, Malcolm joined the Australian team to play in Turkey in the Bitsy Grant Cup (for men over 75 years). The team came a creditable fourth. Malcolm played regularly in the SA teams’ competition, summer and winter, and also enjoyed the Tuesday Social Tennis over the time he was involved with Seniors’ Tennis. Each year he would also play in the Australian Championships, both Teams and Individual and was a frequent successful participant at Mildura and on the Gold Coast at the Queensland Championships. He was also a current State selector.

A degree in Civil Engineering led him into State Roads as Principal Engineer, then as the City Engineer with the local Council. At the time of his death Malcolm was President of the South Australian Olympic Council, which raises funds for future Olympians.

His achievements are all the more remarkable when you consider that as a small child he had to suffer many operations over a period of two years, to overcome the fact that he was born with a “club foot.” (It was something that his mother would never like to have mentioned!) This could be due to the fact that she had to raise the 4 boys in their formative years almost on her own, because their father, being in the Army, was overseas for six years.

Malcolm had had several hernia operations over the last couple of years and recently had another major operation on his stomach. He collapsed and died whilst visiting in hospital his "Grand Slammers" team captain of the last 15 years John Butterworth, SA President.

It has been said by more than one person, that Malcolm was a true gentleman, a pleasure to have in your team, and that one could only have respect for the way he played his sport.

Robyn Castle - Publicity