

Pat McCLEAN

1935 – 2021

Patrician Joan McClean (nee Marks) known as Pat in her tennis world.

Pat was born on 9/3/1935 in Hawker, SA but grew up in Penola, SA. She had a happy childhood playing with her cousins who were mainly boys, and she did everything they did which helped develop her fiercely competitive nature. She always said she could run, throw, kick, and bat as well as all the boys!



Pat went to Adelaide to finish her schooling as a boarder at Cabra Dominican College and it was here her tennis career began.

Pat taught herself to play and spent many hours hitting against the wall and honing her racquet skills, as well as determination and consistency always aiming to beat the wall.

She played competitively for school and moved on to senior tennis through St Therese, Catholic Parish at Colonel Light Gardens.

She represented SA on several occasions with Mr Wally Freeman and his wife her team's chaperone as you can see from the photo.

In 1965 Pat, as a young married woman with three young children, was instrumental in beginning the junior tennis club at Nieass Reserve in Clarence Gardens which was until this time a social club where she played every Saturday. Nieass Reserve became a real force in junior tennis and many top players began their careers under her direction. Pat was awarded Life Membership for her efforts as a player and committee member.



Mr Freeman was again involved as he lived across the road. Pat eventually did secretarial work for Wally at his home and then moved with him to the new headquarters for the South Australian Hardcourt Tennis League in Chelmsford Avenue, Millswood where she continued her secretarial duties but was also responsible for the weekday ladies and night tennis competitions which she managed until her retirement at 60.

She was awarded Life Membership by Tennis SA.

Pat went back to competition tennis in her late 30's at Hopeward Tennis Club and played with many of the juniors who had moved through the ranks at Nieass Reserve. She played many years successfully at division one level where anyone coming up against her knew they were in for a long match because of Pat's amazing consistency, stamina, and ability to retrieve.

Pat's love of tennis continued into Tennis Seniors which she started playing in 1975 and embraced it with open arms!

City versus Country, Berri Teams Carnival, Mildura Tri-state, SA State championships, Australian championships and Masters Games were now added inclusions to Pat's tennis timetable of midweek tennis and night tennis. Pat's husband Terry (deceased – October 2020) often referred to himself as the tennis widower!!

Pat often organised players for these events particularly her Berri team which set the standard for matching outfits for each day of play. She played continuously in Berri for more than twenty years only missing 1988 when her third grandson was born.



Pat loved representing South Australia and looked forward to January each year to compete in the Australian Championships which she competed in until her 70's. She played in the first successful women's winning team back in her 40's and she still had the pennant presented to the team in her collection of trophies, medals and memorabilia collected.

She loved the travel that Tennis Seniors provided. Pat played in every state several times and New Zealand twice. She loved catching up with friends made over the years and many letters were written to stay in touch.

Masters Games also provided many more trips and many, many more medals won for singles doubles and mixed doubles.

I can't name all the great playing partners Pat had over the years, but she did win several medals including gold playing mixed doubles with Ray Woodford and there was always a story to tell.

Pat was always competitive with a great sense of fair play. She won more than she lost, and her motto was "Modest in victory, gracious in defeat."

Pat was loved and respected by all those who knew her. She passed away peacefully on 13/4/2021 and is survived by her children Carol, Susan and Andrew, their partners, 6 grandsons, 1 grand-daughter and 6 great grandchildren.

