

Margaret Zachariah

Forty five years as a Player, Coach, Administrator, Team Manager and Selector.

Margaret started playing squash in 1966 at the age of twenty one at the Balwyn Squash Courts, and after half a season in C grade was encouraged by the centre owner and her coach, the legendary Brian Boys, to jump six grades to play at No. 4 in their State A team.

After one season at the No. 4 position she moved up to play No. 2 , then was selected for the Victorian team after only playing for two years and hadn't even played No.1 for her club.

Margaret then quickly moved up to the No. 1 position for her club team and No. 1 player for her state, and for the following three years she did not lose a match in pennant or tournament play.

In fact in an eight year period from 1969 to 1977 Margaret won every country and metro tournament in Victoria that she participated in which included eight successive Sale and Nunawading Opens, plus seven Warrnambool Opens.

Overall, at the state, national and international levels; Margaret won three Victorian Amateur Championships(1974-76), won the 1977 Australian and 1979 Victorian Open titles, finalist in the 1981 British Open, losing to Vicki Cardwell, semi finalist in the same event in 1975 & 1980, finished in third place in the inaugural World Open Championship in 1976, losing her semi final to Heather McKay, and a quarter finalist in 1981, plus won the inaugural World Women's over 35 Championship in 1983, and represented her country & state on numerous occasions.

These were remarkable achievements after starting out at age 21, plus she also suffered a virtual career ending injury in 1978 which took over twelve months to be diagnosed and corrected.

After her retirement in 1982 from Open tournament play Margaret moved into coaching and was an instant success and was coach of several Victorian and Australian teams.

Not only was Margaret very successful with her on court coaching, but off the court she took on the role of Secretary of the Professional Squash Coaches Association of Victoria (PSCAV) in 1983, a position she held for 28 years, plus in 1992 also took on the role of Secretary of the Professional Squash Coaches Association of Australia (PSCAA), in which she served for 19 years.

Roger Flynn, who held the position of Vice President of the PSCAV for 17 years, and of the PSCAA for 14 years stated, "Margaret fully understood the role of coaching, and how to keep coaches involved, a selfless person who held the coaching component of the sport together, both in Victoria and nationally for decades."

As if all of the above was not enough, Margaret also found time to be a National and Victorian Selector for over fifteen years.