



NTMSA

JUDITH GOADBY MEMORIAL AWARD

Please find below NTMSA's nomination for the 2013 Judith Goadby Memorial Trophy detailing a short resume of our nominee's achievements for your consideration.

DR RICHARD WEIR - President NTMSA

Richard began playing squash in the dim dark past (1974) because it was raining and he couldn't play tennis – so he says!! Richard moved to Darwin in 1982 when there were 4 squash Centre's in Darwin - (Dashwood, Squashworld, Millner and Howard Springs), and about 2,000 players. He started playing in Div 3 No. 4 after coming from Sydney Div G No. 12 – this was a significant improvement – so he thought. Richard managed to win one game in his first competition. That's one game not one match. Playing for Squashworld, Richard started Club training for 4 hours each Saturday and would play the best people who were around, and slowly his game started improving. He had a knee reconstruction in 1986 and it was back to square 1. Slightly older and wiser Richard got a bit of coaching and changed his grip which initially was difficult but in the end meant a vast improvement in his overall game. Squash in Darwin was in a decline and Squashworld eventually closed and all Clubs amalgamated into what is now the DSA, Darwin Squash Association. Richard was President of Squashworld when it closed in 1996.

One of Richard's most memorable times with squash in Darwin is after a really hard match at Dashwood, many years ago – sitting at the bar and wondering what the really bright thing in the mirror was – sunrise – ooops. It doesn't happen that often these days...

Richard can brag about one of his greatest achievements in squash – and that was a victorious win over the renowned Tony James on one of Tony's trips home from the PSA circuit.

Richard was the driving force behind the team in 2008 where he, and a handful of NTMSA members and supporters, co-ordinated a very successful National Master's Championships in Darwin, possibly the last Master's Championships to be held in Darwin due to the uncertain future of the McMillans Road Centre and no guarantee of another facility in the immediate future.

Richard held the President's role of the Darwin Squash Association (DSA) for a number of critical years commencing in 2005, in what could be described as both an uncertain financial and future perspectives. The Centre had been experiencing difficulties due to its age, an impending date for demolition and subsequent redevelopment. The Committee had been served with notice to vacate with the owner declining to extend the building's lease. This impacted heavily on the Club, the small amount of cash reserves built over many years now being depleted from legal expenses challenging the validity of the exit notice. Nevertheless after consultation with the Committee, Richard's decision was to keep the Centre open for as long as financially possible to maintain continuity of the game.

With no certain future for the game, Club and its circa 350 members, Richard tirelessly lobbied the NT Government and was successful in obtaining a guarantee that the game would be given a home(land parcel) in the Marrara Sports Precinct.

Richard's next step was to direct the Committee as well as certain Club members, and involve the Peak Body (Squash NT), to explore all avenues of how to obtain the necessary funds to construct a new Centre. Concepts were drafted and costs between \$1.6million being the most basic to \$12million being an all bells and whistles complex were estimates of what would be required to build a new Centre.

In the meantime the McMillans Road Centre had exhausted all avenues to remain open longer term.

At the eleventh hour, and after Richard's several meetings with the NT Government, a funding commitment of \$4million was received from the NT Government saving the sport from an ultimate demise. The project was then handed over to the Peak Body to manage and with the assistance of DSA President, has now become a reality ensuring the future of squash in Darwin. We can now boast a 12 court Centre.

Richard put an extraordinary amount of his own time into the securing of the new Centre with no recognition nor acknowledgement so as we can all keep enjoying the game of squash. It goes without saying that without Richard Weir's contribution, the game would probably not have survived.

Richard is coming up to his 12th year of representing the Northern Territory in the National Master's Championships.

Richard still holds the position of President of NTMSA which he claimed in 2005 and we are all very thankful of his commitment to Master's squash and squash in general.

Regards,
Kay Dobson
Secretary
NTMSA