

## Terry Ronan 1953-2014

Sport was an important part of life for Terry Ronan. He coached fives, rugby and cricket very well and, on his day, played even better. In his youth he was a top-class rugby player, and he played fives as a boy on the courts at Swansea Grammar School. Later, playing cricket for Sonning CC – and for the Bradfield Eccentrics in their evening matches – he was a dangerous batsman who could take an attack to pieces once he got in.

I would say Terry's guiding principles as a fives partner were: 'Hit it hard, volley it if you can, enjoy the game and beat Neil Marshall if possible'. My memories of him in evening games of doubles at Bradfield against Messrs Marshall and Fraser after the boys had gone to tea are of an ever enthusiastic partner, so delighted when one of his shots hit the buttress or the nick that it seemed as if we'd won the game outright. As a matter of fact, we did win quite often, and it gave Terry a lot of pleasure!

Terry also enjoyed playing in the President's Cup competition, which fives players will know involves a severe test of one's fitness, with three plate contests as well as the main draw. In 1993, he drew Hamish Buchanan as a partner and they eventually won the 'Mate's Plate', the toughest of all the plates to win, after a mammoth battle in the final against Sam Roberts and James Harrison, 16-15, 16-15. Hamish sums up Terry perfectly: 'Always a friendly face and warm hello, but like most games masters fiercely competitive on court. Terry was determined to 'win something after the hell of a dozen games of Fives in a day''. In fact, Terry was so dehydrated and exhausted after that day's play that the other occupants of the Bradfield car on the way home were quite worried about him – but we got him there in one piece in the end!

It was typical of Terry to come back to the President's Cup the next year, when he was again on the winners' list. Partnering Jonathan Bartle, he shared in a win of the 'Love Mug' (another of the plates), but success in the main competition was sadly to elude him.

Terry gave a lot back to fives at Bradfield, encouraging his son Ed to take up the game, supporting him at every possible opportunity and thoroughly enjoying his successes at school and university levels. Terry became master-in-charge of fives when Neil Marshall left Bradfield in 2002, and he ran it with care and enthusiasm. He started David Butler, currently a top 10 player in the National Rankings, on his fives career in 2007/08, and handed over the reins to Jeremy Ball in 2009. Despite suffering badly from arthritis, which stopped him playing fives, Terry was able to continue to enjoy sport in the form of golf until the end of his life. He was a true sportsman in every way.

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