

Bob Dorey (1939-2018)

Rugby Fives Association, January 2018

The RFA is sad to report the death this month of Alleyn Old Boy fives player Bob Dorey. In 1957 he won the Public Schools Singles at Whitgift School.

A left-hander of notable elegance, Bob Dorey went on to be a successful senior player, reaching the final of the National Doubles with his school partner Pat Badmin in 1960. There they lost to Old Dunstonians Stan Holt and David Gardner in the final, having knocked out the 4-time defending champions Pretlove and Silk in the second round. An occasional player thereafter, Bob reached the semi-final in 1967 playing with Cambridge undergraduate Bob Dolby: they lost to previous champions John Pretlove and Bob Smith — all four players were AOBs.

A very talented sportsman, whose pursuit of fives, football and cricket in particular was curtailed at an early stage by heart disease, Bob worked for the London Underground. Like many people of talent and commitment he found many activities in retirement to keep him busy.



Bob Dorey all in white at Alleyn's in the Cyriax Cup final

The Croydon Advertiser 8/9.1.2018 referred to Bob Dorey as “the man responsible for bringing Croydon’s tram network back to the borough”. It all began after his schooling at Alleyn’s School. Bob did not take up the offer of a place at Cambridge University but for family reasons took a job working as a clerical assistant for London buses. This is where his influential and prolific career in the transport industry began. By the 1980s, he had become the development director for the London Underground and came up with the idea of the Docklands Light Railway.

Subsequently, in 1992, he was appointed development director for the Board of Transport and championed the idea of bringing trams back to Croydon. In 2000 his idea became a reality as the first tram took to the tracks.

For his work for transport services in London, he received an OBE in 1998.

Bob suffered with heart problems almost all of his adult life, but, despite this, in retirement he took up various roles including a voluntary position on the board for the Sussex Housing and Care Association and as chairman for Kick London, a charity that worked in schools developing sports and teamwork.