

Kevin Chin a Territory tennis great

Inbox

Tom George

Dear NT Tennis Community,

Please see below a statement from Tennis NT honouring the life of Territory tennis great Kevin Chin who sadly passed away recently. We have attached photos of Kevin and an article from the NT News which pay tribute to Kevin and celebrate his incredible life. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Joyce, Mark, Natalie and all of Kevin's family and friends.

Tennis NT Statement: Kevin Chin

Tennis NT acknowledges the passing of Kevin Chin. Kevin was one of Darwin's leading tennis players in the post war era. He grew up in Darwin playing tennis, football, baseball, basketball, table tennis and athletics, all at a high level, but he excelled when playing tennis.

Kevin was born in Darwin in September 1940. He left the Northern Territory as a toddler when he was evacuated in December 1941 during World War 2, just before Darwin was bombed. His family lived with relatives in Sydney for 4 years and returned overland to Darwin soon after permission was granted. In 1962 Kevin moved to Brisbane for a year to complete his surveying cadetship. There he studied, worked and qualified as a Licenced Land Surveyor. Except for 5 years, Kevin lived his whole life in the Northern Territory. He was a real Northern Territorian.

Kevin used to play tennis as much as time allowed. He played before and after school on the school court as well as on an old asphalt court in Mitchell Street, near the Darwin Club. One night when he was working in a restaurant, he found a wallet that had been dropped by a patron. Kevin realised that it belonged to Mr. Ted Davies, so he returned the wallet to Mr. Davies, who was a good tennis player, owner of a Sports Store and Secretary of the Tennis Association. Ted recognized Kevin as the lad he'd seen playing tennis and offered him some coaching lessons to show his gratitude and for Kevin's honesty. Kevin enthusiastically accepted the offer and made the most of this opportunity. In those days, there were no tennis coaches available to young people, no Institute of Sport and no Government funding to send promising sports persons interstate for further training or national competition. Ted Davies coaching improved Kevin's technique and set him on the path to win numerous tennis championships.

Kevin's tennis trophy collection started when he was 13. He won the Boys Under 14 Singles Championship in 1954, and he took home the Under 17 trophy as well that same year. In 1955 he won the Under 17 Singles Easter competition. He also won trophies for athletics, basketball and baseball.

But it was in 1957 that Kevin shocked everyone especially his opponents, when he won three trophies in the Men's tennis competition. He won the Men's Singles Easter Competition, Men's Open Doubles and the coveted Men's Open Singles. He was only sixteen, in spite of the local paper reporting him as a seventeen year old. He won the Singles title another three times, in 1963, 1964, and 1965. **Kevin may well be the only born and bred Territorian,**

and “Darwin lad” to have won the perpetual Parap Cup Trophy and Kevin did it not once, but four times! With his partner he also won the Men’s Open Doubles three times in 1957, 1959 and 1960. In his later years Kevin won the Veteran Men’s Open Doubles in 1984 and 1985. His tennis trophy collection spans over 30 years.

As a licenced Land Surveyor, Kevin’s work took him all over the Territory, from Darwin to Alice Springs and out to the eastern and western borders of the Northern Territory. During the dry season when bush roads were opened, he was out for up to 6 weeks at a time, so unfortunately he couldn’t play tennis and compete every year.

In 1956, Kevin was selected to carry the Olympic Flame which landed in Darwin on the way to Melbourne. In 1990, he took part in the Torch re-run when Melbourne bid to host the 1996 Olympics. In 1997, he participated in the Olympic Journey parade to promote the 2000 Olympics in Sydney.

Later, in 2000 Kevin was an Olympic Torch runner for the Sydney Olympics - he was able to buy the Torch he carried which is now in his Memorabilia Collection. In 2000 Kevin was awarded the Queen Elizabeth the Second “Australian Sports Medal” for Sporting Achievement. In 2018, Kevin was a Baton bearer in the relay for the Melbourne Commonwealth Games.

Sadly, after a long illness Kevin passed away on 31st May this year, aged 81. He had a fulfilled and rewarding life and is survived by his wife Joyce, children Mark and Natalie and his five grandchildren.

Vale Kevin Chin.



Tom George

Chief Executive Officer – Tennis NT | Tennis NT HQ

TGeorge@Tennis.com.au | 9 Abala Road Marrara Northern Territory 0812 Australia

Ph: +61 8 8981 5609 | Mob: +61 466 493 903

www.tennis.com.au | www.ausopen.com

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