

WORLD SENIORS TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS MEXICO MARCH 2010

Young Cup 40+	1 KYM IRELAND 2 JANELLE SPITTLE 3 MELINDA OBAH
Bueno Cup 50+	1 LYN MORTIMER 2 LEANNE SWAYSLAND 3 WANDA CLOTHIER
Italia Cup 35+	1 RHYS MCDUGALL 2 JAMIE WHITE
Trabert Cup 40+	1 CHRIS O'MARA 2 PAUL KLEVERLAAN 3 RINO TRAFORTI
Dubler Cup 45+	1 SIMON ARMS 2 MANUEL RADIC 3 STEVE CASEY
Perry Cup 50+	1 GLENN BUSBY 2 STEVE WHITECROSS 3 MIKE FORD
Austria Cup 55+	1 ANDREW RAE 2 GARY THOROUGHGOOD 3 BRUCE OSBORNE

Diary of the trip by Steve Whitecross

March 26 - Day 1

We flew Qantas from Brisbane to L.A. Other players were leaving from Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. At the airport we celebrated Janelle Spittle's 44th birthday, which we were still celebrating 40 hours later at dinner in Mexico City. It was a 14 hour flight to L.A. then 4 hours to Mexico City. We caught up with other Aussies at the beautiful 5 star Camino Real Hotel and everyone was buzzing with excitement at the possibilities of the next 2 weeks in a new country and world titles at our favourite sport.

March 27 - Day 2

We found out that Wanda and Rino were delayed 24 hours from their flight from Brisbane, trouble with their Virgin plane. After very little sleep in the previous 36 hours due to flights and catching up with everyone, we all started practicing with our teams. I love being part of a team atmosphere and in early February had sent my captain a text letting him know I wanted to be as fit as ever to help our team try and get the best possible result that we could achieve. The 50 and 55 teams hit across the road at Club Deportivo, a fabulous clay court centre with 15 courts, 3 large swimming pools, handball and soccer courts. The 35, 40, 45 age groups hit at their respective hardcourt centres. We all found that the balls flew, they were hard pressureless rocks that you had to work more spin into keeping them

inside the baseline and with the 7,500 feet altitude making your breathing a little more difficult, we realized this was going to be a very tough assignment.

March 28 - Day 3

All practice courts were $\frac{3}{4}$ hour away from the hotels today. Mike Ford had a very lucky escape, leaving his small bag on court that contained passports, money, cards etc. 2 hours later it was returned to him restoring his faith in human nature. I thoroughly enjoyed hitting over the last 2 days with Glenn and Mike, encouraging each other, pushing each other to work harder. We practiced in our Aussie shirts and felt a real team spirit, as did the other teams, bonding together. Tonight was the opening ceremony, set in a huge stadium. We all marched behind our countries flag with our green and gold tracksuits on, the hairs on the back of our necks standing up as we paraded in front of 1000 Mexicans cheering loudly to every country. A spectacular 2 hour show with very impressive Mexican Dancing, fireworks and a lighting of the flame along a wire the length of the court that resembled the Sydney Olympics. At the evenings entertainment with darts, balloons, games Bruce and Melinda had everyone in hysterics with challenges at the games. Mel levelled their games at 2 all, when she nailed the 'target' with the pea shooter.

March 29 - Day 4

My 50's team had a bye, so we went for a 2 hour practice and then a trip to the Mexican Pyramids, which date back 200 B.C. a magnificent tour. Everyone else played their 1st round matches.

40 ladies lost to Sweden 1-2

50 ladies lost to U.K. 0-3 (3 very tight matches)

35 men lost to U.S.A. 0-3

40 men lost to Spain 1-2

45 men def Finland 3-0

55 men def Costa Rica 3-0

March 30 - Day 5

I had slight strain from walking up the Pyramids, so I decided to drop out of the singles, with the 1st though for my team and then self preservation to get through the next 10 days. I had every confidence in Mike as he was hitting very well. You put so much into 2 months of training then bang an injury.

40 ladies lost to U.S.A 0-3

50 ladies def Sweden 3-0

35 men lost to Argentina 1-2

40 men lost to Sweden 1-2 (3 extremely close matches that left the boys shattered)

45 men bye

50 men def Canada 3-0

55 men def Costa Rica 3-0

Weather in Mexico is 10 min-28 deg. max.

March 31 - Day 6

40 ladies bye

50 ladies def Germany 3-0

35 men lost 1-2

40 men lost to Spain 1-2

45 men lost to Austria 1-2

50 men def Costa Rica 3-0

55 men def Germany 3-0

Tonight we celebrated an Aussie tradition night as 25 people got together and enjoyed many jokes and stories already in 6 days.

April 1 - Day 7

40 ladies lost to U.K. 0-3

50 ladies - 35 men - 40 men bye

45 men lost to Netherlands 1-2

50 men def U.K. (quarter final) 3-0

55 men def Mexico (semi final) 3-0

All players attended the 'Gala Dinner' at a beautiful candlelit 17th century Mexican Monastery. Everyone got dressed up and it was a very special evening. Half a dozen players were experiencing gastro and poor tummy rumblings over the last couple days. It is something to watch very closely when playing overseas, what you eat and drink.

April 2 - Day 8

Ladies 40 lost 1-2

Ladies 50 def Argentina 3-0

35 men bye

40 men lost to U.K. 1-2

45 men def Japan 3-0

50 men def Colombia (semi final) 3-0

I had not seen Glenn so excited before, when he won 6 and 4 to clinch a berth in a final. It was his 1st team final in 6 attempts.

55 men bye

April 3 - Day 9

ladies 40 def Turkey 3-0 FINAL PLACING 9th

50 ladies def Spain 2-1 FINAL PLACING 5th

35 men def Turkey 3-0 FINAL PLACING 12th

40 men def Turkey 3-0 FINAL PLACING 15th

45 men bye FINAL PLACING 11th

50 men lost to U.S.A 2-0 FINAL PLACING 2nd

55 men def U.K. 3-0 FINAL PLACING 1st (WORLD CHAMPIONS)

We had great celebrations tonight after a long teams week, lots of spark and optimism about the past week and everyone looking forward to the individuals in the 2nd week

April 4 - Day 10

A 6 hour bus trip heading north to San Luis Potosi. Rino made his way back to OZ.

April 5-7 - Days 11-13

3 days of tough grinding tennis in 30 deg. heat and altitude saw Lyn (55s), Leanne (50s), Andrew, Gary (55s), Glenn (50s), Simon, Manuel, Steve (45s) and Paul (40s) through to the quarter finals. A top effort from Paul after getting bundled out 1st round in his 4 previous world championship attempts and also after a knee op and elbow problems over the past 18 months. Paul set about losing 10kgs weight and it has all paid off. Mike had played superbly in week 1 and wrenched his back at the start of week 2 and that was his tournament gone. We had a superb 'Gala Evening' of singing, dancing. A top meal was had by all at Club La Lomas, a stunning 5 star tennis club.

April 8 - Day 14

Andrew and Glenn had good wins and made it through to the semis. Some real good doubles wins had us all keyed up for tomorrow.

April 9 - Day 15

A huge day for the Aussies! Kym (40s) wins the consolation singles. Simon and Manuel (45s) win the world doubles title, Steve runner up silver. Leanne and Wanda (50s) defeat the No.1 seeded Americans to advance to the final. Paul and Chris (40s) win the world doubles championship. Lyn (50s) had a top win to advance to the final in doubles. Glenn wins 2-6 6-4 6-2 against the Fed Express from the U.S. in a tough hard fought match to advance to the final. Andrew (55s) wins 6-2 7-5 in a tough semi to advance to the final.

April 10 - Day 16

The Spittle's, Kym and Mel jet off to Vegas. 5 or 6 have gone back to Oz already. 5 or 6 heading to L.A. Manuel, Vicky, Lyn and Ray off to Europe for 4-6 months for tournaments, club tennis, lucky things! Leanne and Wanda (50s), Lyn (55s), Andrew and Gary (55s) all World Doubles Champions. Andrew (55s) loses a tough final 4 and 6. Glenn (50s) wins 2 and 0 to win his 3rd World Singles Championship. Despite being hampered by a nagging torn calf muscle and many tough opponents who pushed him to the brink in many sets, he shone through with a strong, tough mental, physical strength and fierce fighting 'Aussie grit' that we all admired.

Overall Mexico has been an outstanding success with the weather 28- 30 degrees ,very little rain, lovely people, brilliant organisation both weeks in Mexico City (pop 22 million) and San Luis Potosi (pop 80,000). Affordable prices, bargain shopping, top hotels, 26 great Aussies who had a ball. (9 world doubles champions),1 finalist doubles,1 world singles champion and 1 finalist. A winning World Champion team !!! Everyone wore their green and gold with heads held high on and off the court.

ADIOS from MEXICO!