2017 Junior Ron Rathbone Local History Prize

<u>Ken Rosewall</u>

St George's Tennis Star
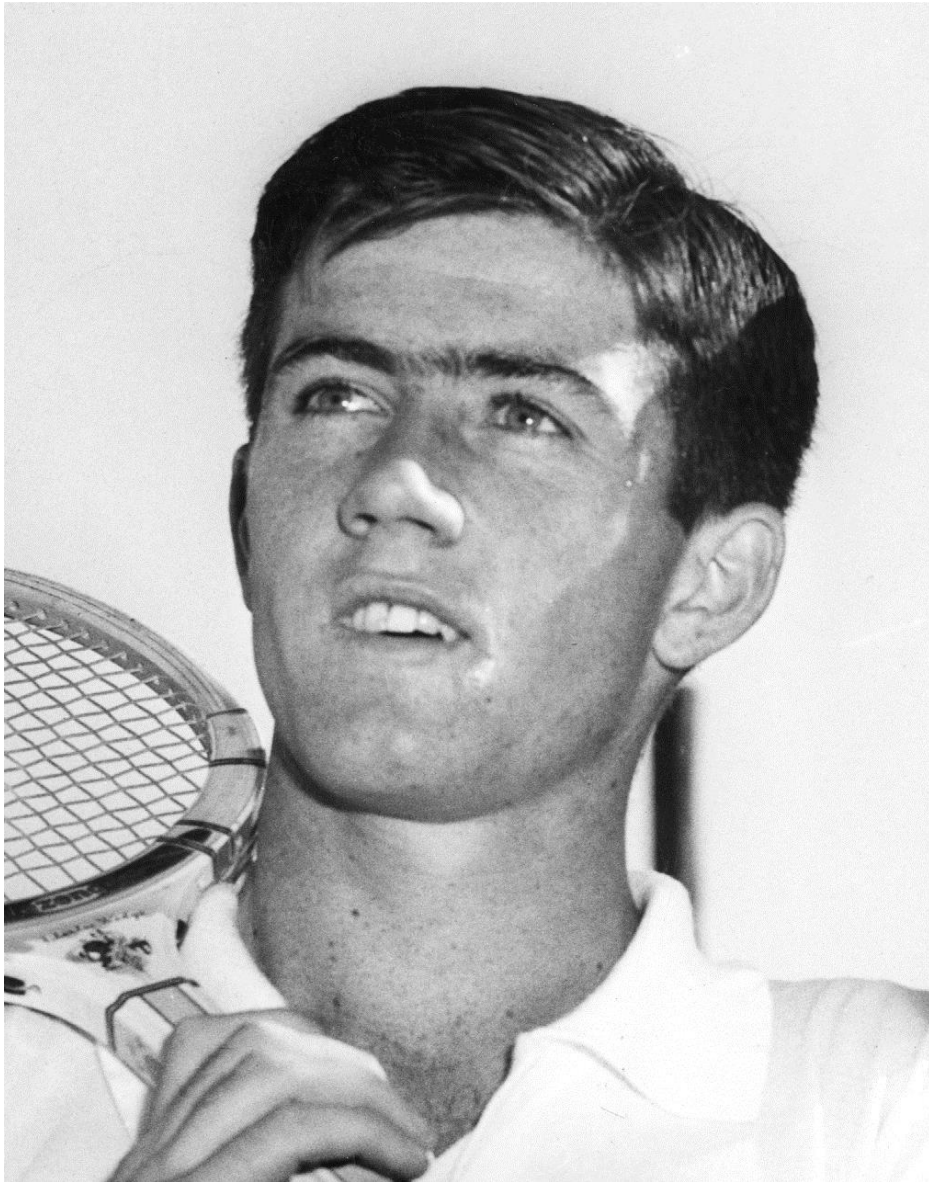
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Introduction

Ken Rosewall is a former top ranking tennis player from Australia. He won a record of 23 tennis majors, including 8 grand slam singles titles and before the open era, which is when professional tennis players could play with amateur players, he won a total of 15 Pro Slam titles and a record of 35 major finals overall.

Ken is considered one of the greatest tennis players of all times. His backhand was astonishing as many of the tennis players found the backhand harder to master. He also enjoyed a long career from the early 1950's to the early 1970's. Rosewall was one of the 2 best male tennis players for 9 years and was the world number 1 for a numerous years in the early 1960's.
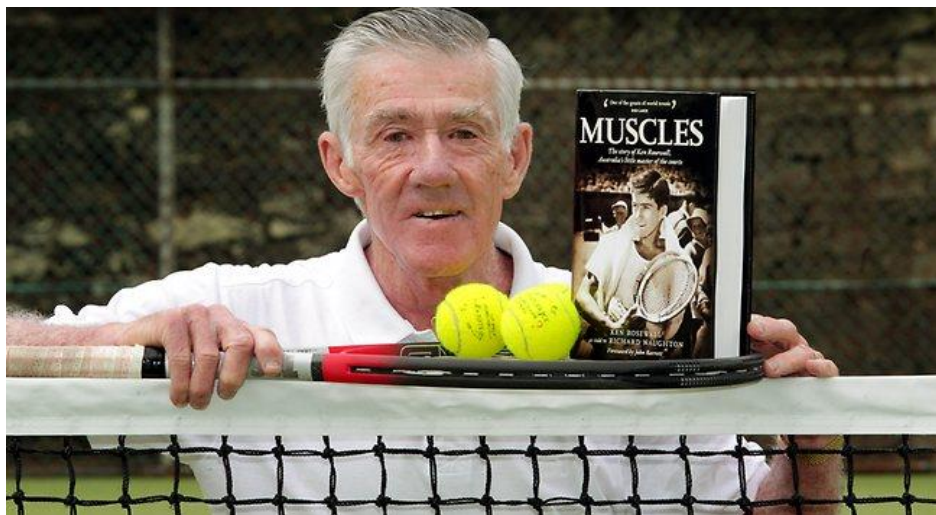
Early Life

Ken Rosewall also known as Kenneth Robert Rosewall was born on the 2nd November 1934 in Hurstville, Sydney. His father was a grocer at Penshurst, Sydney but then they moved to Rockdale, where his father bought three clay tennis courts.

Ken started playing at the age of three years old when he had a shortened racquet and used both hands for his forehand and backhand shots as he was not capable enough at the age of three. They practiced early in the morning, doing the same move over and over again. He was naturally left handed but he was trained by his father to play right handed due to the unorthodox shot he played on his dominant side. This caused Ken to have the strongest backhand in tennis history.

Ken Rosewall attended Rockdale Public School and Kogarah High School for his education. At Kogarah High School, his peers would usually refer to him as muscles as a sarcastic name because of his small figure.

Achievements and Important Events

When he was only 15 and still attending school, Ken Rosewall reached the semi-finals of the 1950 New South Wales Metropolitan Championships. After these

championships, Ken Rosewall left school to pursue a career in tennis.

In 1951, when Rosewall was only 16, he won his first men's tournament in Manly. A year later, when Rosewall was still only 17, he reached the quarterfinals of the U.S. Championships. He even upset the top seeded player in the world, Vic Seixas in the fourth round, causing a worldwide stir around this talented player.

Ken Rosewall was one of the youngest tennis players to ever reach the international stage of tennis. In 1953, when he was just 19 years old, Rosewall won the Australian singles and doubles, the French singles and doubles, and the Wimbledon doubles. He also entered the Davis Cup with Lew Hoad in Melbourne, Australia, but was defeated by Tony Trabert.

Ken Rosewall was only 18 years old when he became the top seeded tennis player of the whole world. Only at the age of 18, Rosewall had already won multiple grand slams and world championships including the Australian singles and doubles, the French singles and doubles, and the Pacific Southwest Championships and was the runner up at Wimbledon.

Throughout Rosewall's long-lasting career, he was able to win 8 grand-slam titles, many world championships, and other events all over the world. Ken Rosewall's average winning rate was at 75% for most of his career. Unlike many professional tennis players, this was a very high success rate. From all of his significant achievements throughout Ken Rosewall's lengthy career, the centre

court at Sydney's Olympic Tennis Centre is now named 'Ken Rosewall Arena' in his honour.

Ken Rosewall Arena

Conclusion

Ken Rosewall is still alive today and is often seen at the Australian open watch the game he loves. He is a grandfather of five, living in Northern Sydney. He still frequently plays tennis. Rosewall is a tennis legend that

should be remembered forever.

At the end of his career, he had won over 130 titles, including many grand slams and world championships. His achievements are well known all around Australia and the world making him one of the best tennis players in history. I believe that Ken Rosewall, the Tennis star from St George should be remembered for eternity.

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