

Roger MILLS

We are sad to report that Roger Mills passed away on 16th October.

His involvement with our Club (Wimbledon Squash & Badminton Club at that time) began as a member of the Junior Sessions in the early 1950s at a time when these were led by Ian Palmer. As time went by he assisted Dorothy Hinchcliff in coaching the Surrey Juniors, and this was an indication of what was to come in later years when he became National Coach for England, and later for Scotland; coaching was always in his blood. He had very strong and determined ideas about coaching and tactics, which did not always endear him to others but, in spite of any such clashes with other coaches, he always remained a very professional and successful coach, helping many juniors to achieve a high standard. He also toured the Far East to study coaching techniques there.

He played in the Club's A-plus session which, at that time, included members who were county and national representatives, as well as top overseas players. He always made a point of playing with the younger members in this session, but during the week he was training and practising hard to become England No. 1 at Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles. Having won numerous National Under-18 titles in the late 1950s, he went on to win 9 English Nationals titles, the 1966 Commonwealth Games Mixed Doubles with Angela Bairstow (she later married Ian Palmer), the 1969 All England Mixed Doubles title with Gillian Perrin (Gilks) and represented Surrey and England on very many occasions.

Roger was a great badminton player as well as a great student of, and authority on, the game itself, taking a particular delight in the technical and psychological aspects of maximising performance. He wrote several books about badminton and tactics, etc.

He will be remembered not only as one of England's finest players, but also as one of its most influential ones. One of his fellow Surrey County team members has said "He has left us now and badminton will be the poorer for his loss; however if they play badminton in Heaven they had better do it his way or God will hear about it."

Our sincere condolences to Sue, Debbie, Sam, Laurence and Emma.