



Vale Antal Bolvári

It is with great sadness the Club has heard of the passing of Hungarian Olympic Champion Antal Bolvári.

Bolvári settled in Australia after the 1956 Olympic Games. He had won gold medals for Hungary in both the 1952 and 1956 Olympic Games, and had also been selected in the "World" water polo team on three occasions, ranking him in the top 5 players in the world at the time. In 1958, Bolvári came to Western Australia, and took up the role of Club Captain and Coach of the Melville Water Polo Club.

The 1958-59 season is regarded as a milestone for the club, and for the Western Australian Water Polo Association due to Melville's appointment of Bolvári, in what the club refers to in its history as the "Bolvári Revolution". Bolvári's knowledge of the game lifted the quality of the club's performance and, as a result, the whole of the State competition. Bolvári had an influence on many of the members within the club, the most notable being Tom Hoad, who went on to devote his life to water polo.

In this historic 1958-59 season led by Bolvári, Melville won the Western Australian Amateur Water Polo Association A Grade Championship 6-5 over Fremantle, with the Melville team remaining undefeated over the season. Bolvári was awarded the Association's A Grade Fairest & Best Award, having scored 4 goals in the Grand Final. Fremantle also had a Hungarian connection in the final, with Imre Takács scoring 3 in the losing side.

Bolvári was appointed Captain Coach and Selector for the Western Australian State Team by the Western Australian Amateur Water Polo Association in November 1958. Under Bolvári's guidance, the Western Australian State Team won their first Australian Title in the 1959 Australian Water Polo Championships held in Perth in February 1959, with the Western Australian team remaining undefeated in the 6 game tournament to win the Championship.

While Bolvári's time at Melville Water Polo Club lasted one short season, his involvement left the club with a lasting legacy. His involvement is a fundamental part of the club's history, and the revolution he started at the club has grown to be amongst the most successful water polo clubs in Australia. We honour Bolvári's historic involvement in the club through the Bolvári medal, awarded to the Most Valuable Player in the Tom Hoad Cup International Club competition.

Bolvári's Olympic legacy has also been embraced by the club, with 14 Olympians to date coming from its membership, starting with Tom Hoad Rome 1960, and the current Australian Men's and Women's Captains, Aaron Younger and Zoe Arancini.

The Melville Water Polo Club Members past and present pass on our sincerest sympathies to the Bolvári family, and the wider Hungarian Water Polo family at the time of their loss.



WA State Team – Australian Champions 1959

Back Row (L to R) E Franklin, T Hoad, M Andrew, G Campbell, I Takács
Front Row (L to R) C Kiely, A Charlston, A Bolvári (Capt/Coach), R Jeffery, F Johnson. Absent P Atherden.