

To the VBSA

7/1/2021

I would like to thank the Victorian Billiards and Snooker Association, the President Mr Paul Cosgriff, Secretary David Chigwidden and the other board members for awarding me a Life Membership to the VBSA.

It is truly an honour to join the handful of Life Members in this governing body's 93 years history. To be inducted as a life member is one of the biggest surprises I have had, and I still cannot work out exactly who the initiators were, but I would like to thank Mark Dunn, David Pitt, Don Richter and Chris Christofi for helping billiards & snooker in Victoria.

Probably it is time to reminisce a little, so after competing, coaching, and commentating in over 35 countries around the world, I can assuredly state that the Victorian Billiards and Snooker Association has run the best amateur Pennant/interclub league competition in the world. When I started it was inspirational playing interclub against many teams. We played in 6-man teams, in the snooker season two and three frames of snooker was played by each player, whilst in the billiard season there were 90 minute matches of billiards. As there was not much snooker on TV and no internet, the crowds who came to the A grade snooker final in the late 70' and early 80's consisted in the 100's of people. It certainly motivated me as a teenager. Playing for the Glenhuntly Leisure Centre, The Postal Institute, Melbourne University and The Chairman's Club was certainly fun and informative. I won my first tournament at the Bentleigh Club in 1977, which I still attend. I remember vividly the match arenas at the Yarraville Club where I think I made the first century snooker break in pennant against Paul Formosa and the tiered seating at the Brunswick club making a World record Amateur billiard break in the early 80's.

Around this time, I also crossed paths with quite a few older people who had direct involvement with Walter Lindrum and they helped me in various ways to achieve winning the same World Professional Championship as the great Walter. People such as Peter Andrew, Murt O'Donoghue, Harry Andrews, Dolly Lindrum and many more were so helpful, as well as the University team of billiard fanatics. Of course, I must thank my parents who supported me in my teens, when a full-size table was installed in the family garage where I practiced for hours, often practising on rain-soaked carpet in the winter and under the baking heat of a tin roof in summer.

Naturally, snooker was also on my radar and winning the Victorian State Snooker Championship in Melbourne also led to winning even bigger snooker tournaments overseas and in Australia. Timing is everything and I went to England in 1984 as the golden age of snooker was beginning in the UK, highlighted by the fact that the snooker ratings on TV were more than tennis and golf; and the prizemoney was just as big as these other sports.

While taking the risk of quitting my Accounting job and turning professional to live in the UK and doing quite well overseas, it certainly was a massive unknown adventure. Perhaps best of all, I hope I gave some inspiration to others to have a go on the pro snooker circuit. I remember having chats, travels, and matches with Neil Robertson, Quinten Hann, Johl Younger, Steve & James Mifsud and others, so seeing their achievements blossom is certainly enjoyable.

Thank you to my wife and family for their support and may all the players of The VBSA continue to enjoy the great sports of billiards and snooker. I hope to see many of them at The RACV Club.

Kind Regards

Robby Foldvari