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Don Talbot (AUS): farewell to a coaching legend

FINA Communications Department

The swimming community is in mourning after the loss of one of its most renowned coaches, Don Talbot. At 87, the Australian legend passed away on November 3, 2020 after a coaching career that included many Olympic and world medals from the 1960s until the beginning of the 21st century.

Two of his most recent trajectory's highlights included a very successful participation of his swimmers at the home 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, and at the 2001 FINA World Championships, where Australia led the medal chart, namely beating the US team.

Talbot's coaching skills were initially rewarded by the three medals of the Konrads siblings (John and Ilsa, both freestyle swimmers) at the 1960 Olympics in Rome (ITA). Following on these achievements, he led Australian swimming to more successes in 1964, 1968 and 1972.



With swimming star Ian Thorpe (AUS) - Photo by gettyimages

After that, he went on coaching to Canada and USA (where he was namely in charge of champion Tracy Caulkins), before being nominated Australian Head Coach in 1989.

Under his guidance, stars such Ian Thorpe, Kieren Perkins, Grant Hackett, Petria Thomas or Susie O'Neill were able to shine at the highest level, constituting a true "Australian Swimming Dream Team" in the pool.

After the sad news of his death, his son Scott shared some feelings about the father he admired: "Don was driven by his passion and love for Australia and swimming in Australia. I believe he lived his life to the fullest and was able to do something he loved while travelling the world. From humble beginnings (he was born to English migrants in Sydney, in 1933), swimming was his passion from when he was four years old".

Recalling his father career outside his native country, Scott Talbot considered: "Australia was always his home, and where his heart was and because of this I believe he was able to make his biggest impact in his role as Australian Head coach".

FINA addresses its heartfelt condolences to Don Talbot's family and friends, and to the entire Swimming community in Australia.

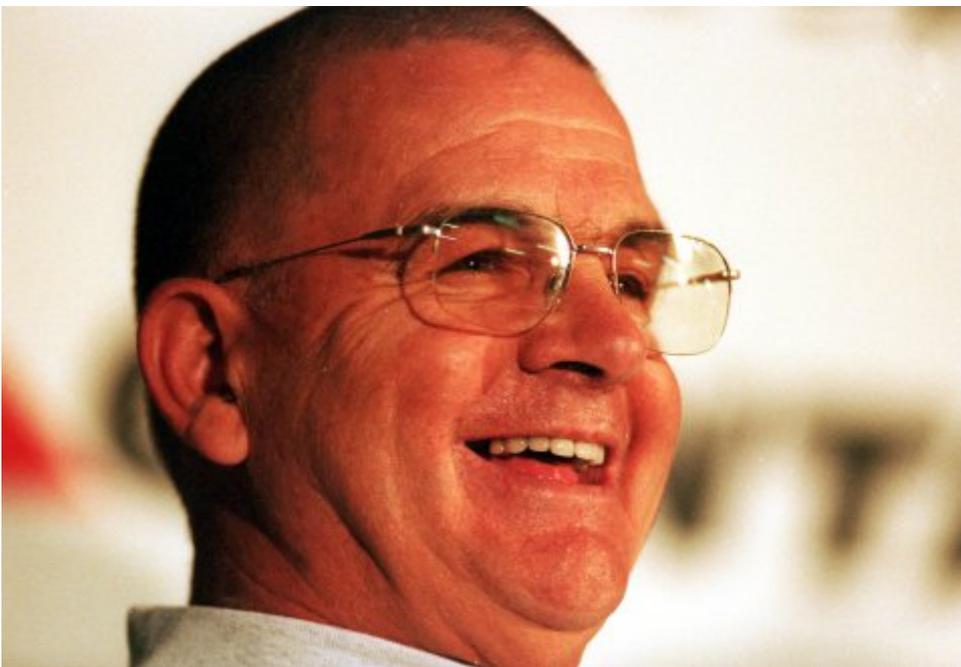


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