

RUPERT FERDINANDS

A BLAZING TENNIS STAR AND MUCH MORE!

(Compiled by Ravi Rudra)

Rupert W. Ferdinands, born April 1936, was an outstanding product of S. Thomas' College, Mt. Lavinia. He is also a former Head Prefect of the School, a B.Sc. (Hons) graduate, Sri Lanka Davis Cup player and Australian qualified tennis coach (Level 3). Rupert excelled in Tennis for his College and Country, having made his national debut as a young schoolboy.



Trophies Galore! 36-year old Rupert Ferdinands with around 150 trophies at his Colombo Residence, just prior to migrating to Australia.

Rupert started tennis as a 10 year old—far too late compared to these days when they start at 5 years or younger. His father George used to take him to the local courts at that age where he watched his father and others play. Rupert liked what he saw. So he started hitting tennis balls against the garage wall at home, and as he got better he drew a line on the wall to represent the height of the net.

Garage Wall gets a battering!

Rupert used the garage wall as there was nowhere else for practice. As he got even better, he drew circles on the wall and learned to hit the circles for accuracy and consistency. He did this for 9 months—just practising on the garage wall. Ultimately, there was not much left of the wall!



“Dad was George—but affectionately known to all as ‘Whitie’ (his identical twin brother was affectionately known as ‘Blackie’!!!)”.

[Rupert’s Dad, George William Ferdinands and Mum, Doreen.](#)

When his father noticed that his son could hit a ball reasonably well, he took him to the local courts where for the first time Rupert actually played on a tennis court. Instantly he shocked a few people who were there. They were amazed and impressed with his standard of play. Tennis history was about to unravel...

The only stroke Rupert could not practice well against the wall was his service and he felt that to be his weakest point right throughout his career. His backhand, however, became his favourite shot and quite often his opponents attacked his backhand thinking, quite naturally, it was his weaker side which suited Rupert very much.

Young Rupert had very little coaching, no sports science back-up, no trainer, no sponsorship and not even a tennis bag.

He took just 2 racquets for a match and that was all. His father had to buy his racquets till he got a job. Tennis certainly is an expensive sport!

“Not sure what years I would have played tennis for College, but at a guess, I would have been in the STC team for the Public Schools Tennis Meet from about 12 years till 19 years. That would be from 1948 till 1955.” - Rupert



14 year-old Rupert playing his favourite stroke—the backhand drive at the Juvenile Tennis tournament in Colombo.

Rupert first won the Sri Lanka National Junior Under 16 Singles Title as a 12 year old (1948), and continued to win the title till 15 years old when he won the National Junior Under 19 Singles title whilst still eligible to play in the U16s, and dominated the U19 title for the next 4 years.

Rupert at 15 years



RUPERT FERDINANDS DEFEATS THE SEEDED KAMO

“Rupert Ferdinands, the 15-year-old student from St. Thomas’ College, Mt Lavinia, established himself as the player of the day when he defeated R. Kamo, the seeded contender from Japan 6-4, 3-6, 6-0, 6-3 and so gave Ceylon tennis reputation a well-needed shot in the arm.

This youngster has for the past two years given undoubted signs of his ability and promise in local championship meets but never

before had he been called upon to shoulder the task of meeting a player of international repute. Ferdinands came through his test with flying colours.

Kamo is rated No. 3 in Japan and is himself very young in years and of small stature. He was one of the players who impressed greatly in Indian Championships and when seen at practices on the previous evening seemed an easy winner. Nor did he belie his reputation. He played admirably and his strokes were executed with a grace and ease marvellous to behold in one so young.

But so well did Ferdinands play and so grandly did he rise to the occasion that Kamo was hard put to last the match through. There was little to choose between them in tennis ability proper, but Ferdinand’s greater fitness physically was the telling factor.”

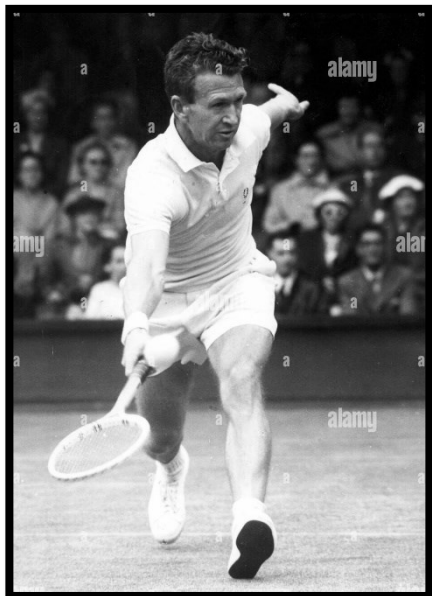
- Daily News

Ranked No. 1 in Ceylon in 1957, Rupert continued to be ranked No. 1 for over a decade. In 1957, 1963, 1969 and 1970, he won the Ceylon National Singles title, also winning 4 National Men’s Double and 5 National Mixed Doubles titles. In 1957 and 1970, he won the National Triple Crown title at one and the same tournament.

ARKINSTALL'S ADVICE TO CEYLON TENNIS – “Catch Them Young’

(March 1953)

‘Ferdinands rated above British Junior Champ’



Australian, Jack Arkinstall (left), the new 1953 Ceylon National Tennis Singles Champion, states that young Rupert Ferdinands (nearly 17), one of our Davis Cup members, is a better player than Billy Knight, the British Junior Tennis Champion.

Arkinstall played against Knight in Queensland and beat him 6-2, 6-0, 6-3 before leaving for Ceylon. Ferdinands, he said, worried him a great deal more in their match and extended him fully to 6-4, 6-4. What surprised him most was the local Junior champion, Ferdinands’ cool

temperament and his splendid length and control.

The Ceylon lad had all the skills but now needed more power in his game, especially in his services. Only experience could teach him courtcraft and finesse. Trip to England and Europe should provide that. He added that the people of Ceylon would be surprised at the change in Ferdinand’s game on his return home.



Billy Knight (left) - Junior Singles Champion, Wimbledon 1953 & Australian Championships 1954.

Just as Good

Commenting on Ferdinands’ standard as compared with Australian juniors, Arkinstall said that with the exception of the ‘terrible twins’ Hoad and Rosewall, he was just as good as the rest.

Ferdinands should concentrate on guile, accuracy, control, length and steadiness. Errors have to be reduced to a minimum.

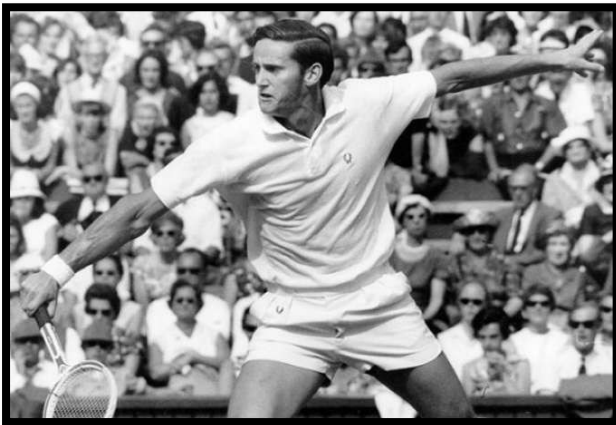
Although a bit on the old side, Douglas Fonseka too would benefit greatly from this trip to England and Europe. Fonseka was still too erratic.

Net Them In

Ceylon should ensure her tennis future by “catching them young” the champion said. Boys and girls between 14 and 16 were the best age groups. For the general improvement of these youngsters a coach was essential.

But if Ceylon wanted to build up a team for the future, Jack Arkinstall stated that two or three youngsters like Ferdinands should be selected and then sent out overseas to gain match practice and experience – in addition to coaching. Getting good players out to Ceylon was not sufficient for the lads would gain very little from seeing them in action or just meeting them once.

Arkinstall picked out two youngsters from Queensland who would hit the headlines in the near future. They are **Roy Emerson** and **Mal Anderson**.



Roy Stanley Emerson (born 3 November 1936) - Australian former tennis player who won 12 Grand Slam singles titles and 16 Grand Slam doubles titles, for a total of 28 Grand Slam titles. All of his singles Grand Slam victories and 14 of his Grand Slam doubles victories were achieved before the open era began in 1968.

Emerson is the only male player to have completed a career Grand Slam (winning titles at all four Grand Slam events) in both singles and doubles, and the first of four male players to complete a double career Grand Slam in singles (later followed by Rod Laver, Novak Djokovic, and Rafael Nadal). His 28 major titles are the all-time record for a male player.



Mal Anderson - Anderson's two best seasons were 1957 and 1958 when, as an amateur, he twice achieved a ranking of world No. 2. In 1957, Anderson won the US Championships as an unseeded player. In 1958, Anderson was a finalist at both the Australian Championships and US Championships... He appeared in another major final in 1972, when at age 36 he was a finalist at the Australian Open, defeating Newcombe in a long five set quarterfinal, and Metreveli in the semifinal, before losing

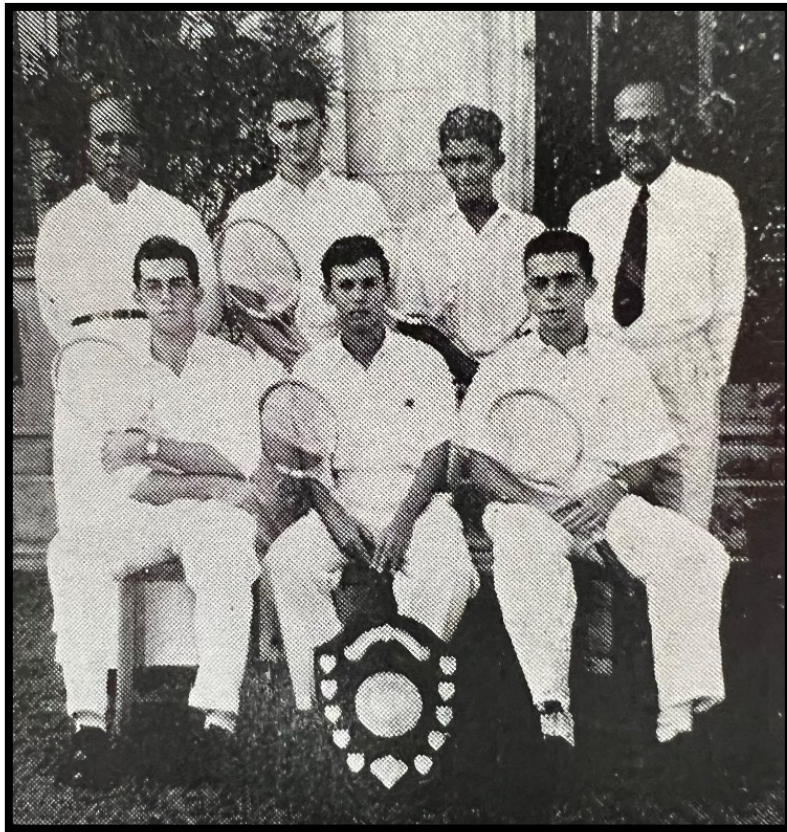
the final to Ken Rosewall... Anderson is the brother-in-law of fellow Australian tennis star Roy Emerson.

Promising youngsters , in Australia, such as Emerson and Anderson, were employed by sports good firms and given much leisure time not only to

practice but to also take part in tournaments. So pleased are the two Queenslanders over their success in our National championships that they have changed their minds about going back to Australia at once. Instead, they have booked their passages to England. They may also visit European tennis centres and enter for meets there.

** Ceylon followed Arkinstall's advice and included Ferdinands in Ceylon's first ever Davis Cup Team the following year (1953) to Holland. Before going over to Holland they were coached for a limited time by the great Fred Perry in England. After his active career as a tennis pro Jack Arkinstall was coach of the young tennis star Manuel Santana from Spain.*

Rupert, remarkably, captained STC to Three Consecutive Public Schools Tennis Championship Titles (1953-55). In 1956, he would go on to coach STC to win the De Saram Shield for the fourth consecutive year.

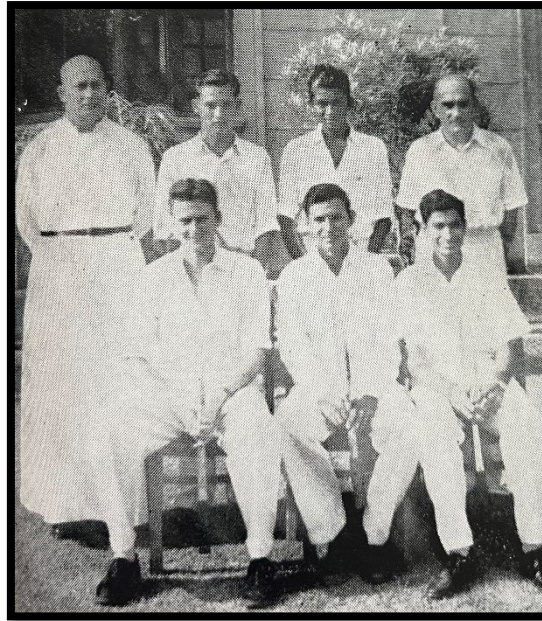


1953-Winners of the De Saram Shield for Public Schools Senior Tennis Champions.

Standing (L-R): The Warden, Rev. Canon de Saram, D.J. Piachaud, R. Praesoody, Mr. C.H. Davidson (Master-in-Charge).

Seated (L-R): C.B.S. Fernando, [R.W. Ferdinands \(Capt.\)](#), S. Maynert,.

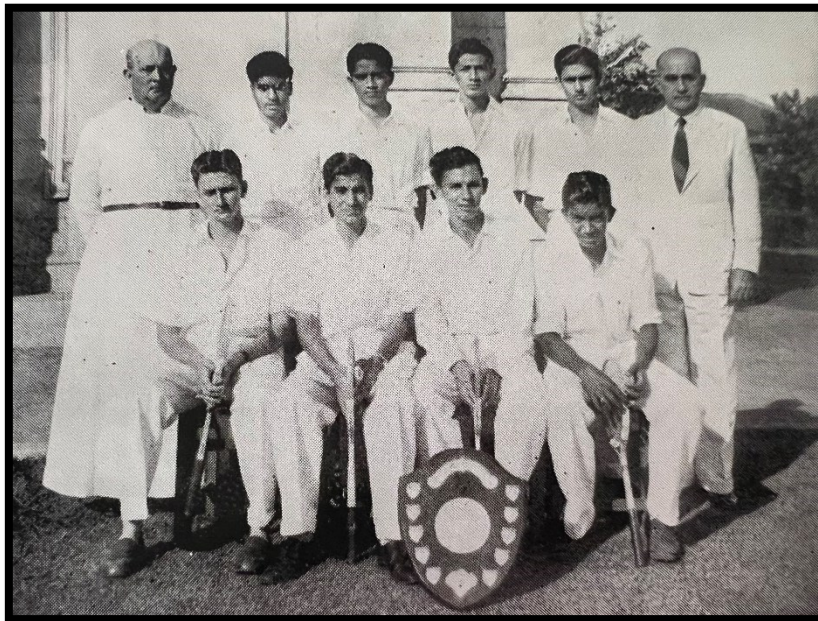
Absent: D. Wijewardene, D.D.N. Selvadurai, N.M. Lakdawalla.



1954-Winners of the De Saram Shield for Public Schools Senior Tennis Champions.

Standing (L-R): The Warden, Rev. Canon de Saram, Derrick Leembruggen, R. Praesoody, Mr. C.H. Davidson (Master-in-Charge).

Seated (L-R): D.J. Piachaud, [R.W. Ferdinands \(Capt.\)](#), N.M. Lakdawalla.



1955-Winners of the De Saram Shield for Public Schools Senior Tennis Champions.

Standing (L-R): The Warden, Rev. Canon de Saram, F.L.N. Senanayake, D.D. Abeysekera, A. Sinnatamby, M.H. Tissera, Mr. C.H. Davidson (Master-in-Charge).

Seated (L-R): D.J. Piachaud, N.M. Lakdawalla, [R.W. Ferdinands \(Capt.\)](#), R. Praesoody.

Rupert made such an impression with his rapid progress that he was selected in Ceylon's first ever Davis Cup team as a 17 year old school boy, and thereafter played in almost every Davis Cup tie for Ceylon until migration to Australia in 1972.



Growing up Rupert was inspired by two legends of the game Koo de Saram (left) in Sri Lanka and Lew Hoad in Australia.

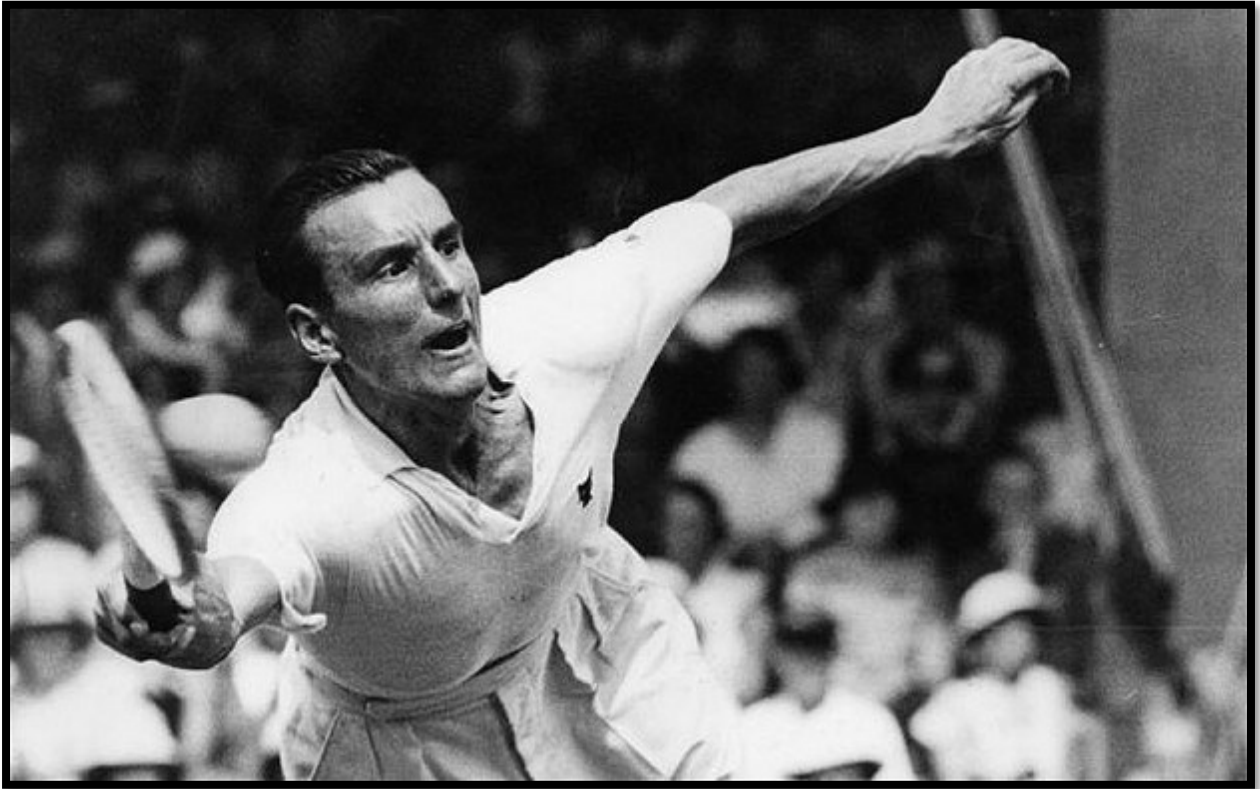
"I had a lot of respect for Koo de Saram. He was a true champion and a gentleman on the court. I took over from him as Ceylon Singles Champion."

- Rupert

Sri Lanka competed in its first Davis Cup in 1953 when they took on the Netherlands as Ceylon.

Thanks to the assistance of Mr. Chinnadurai the foreign Secretary of the Indian Tennis Association the Sri Lanka team had a short period of training in England under that outstanding British player **Fred Perry**.

Legendary Fred Perry



*“The coach that impressed and influenced me the most was the famous **Fred Perry** of England when he coached the Ceylon Davis Cup Team in 1953 for a brief period before we went over to Holland for our Davis Cup match.*

I remember Fred was teaching us the finer points in doubles, and I was playing with him against Percy Ernst and Douglas Fonseka.

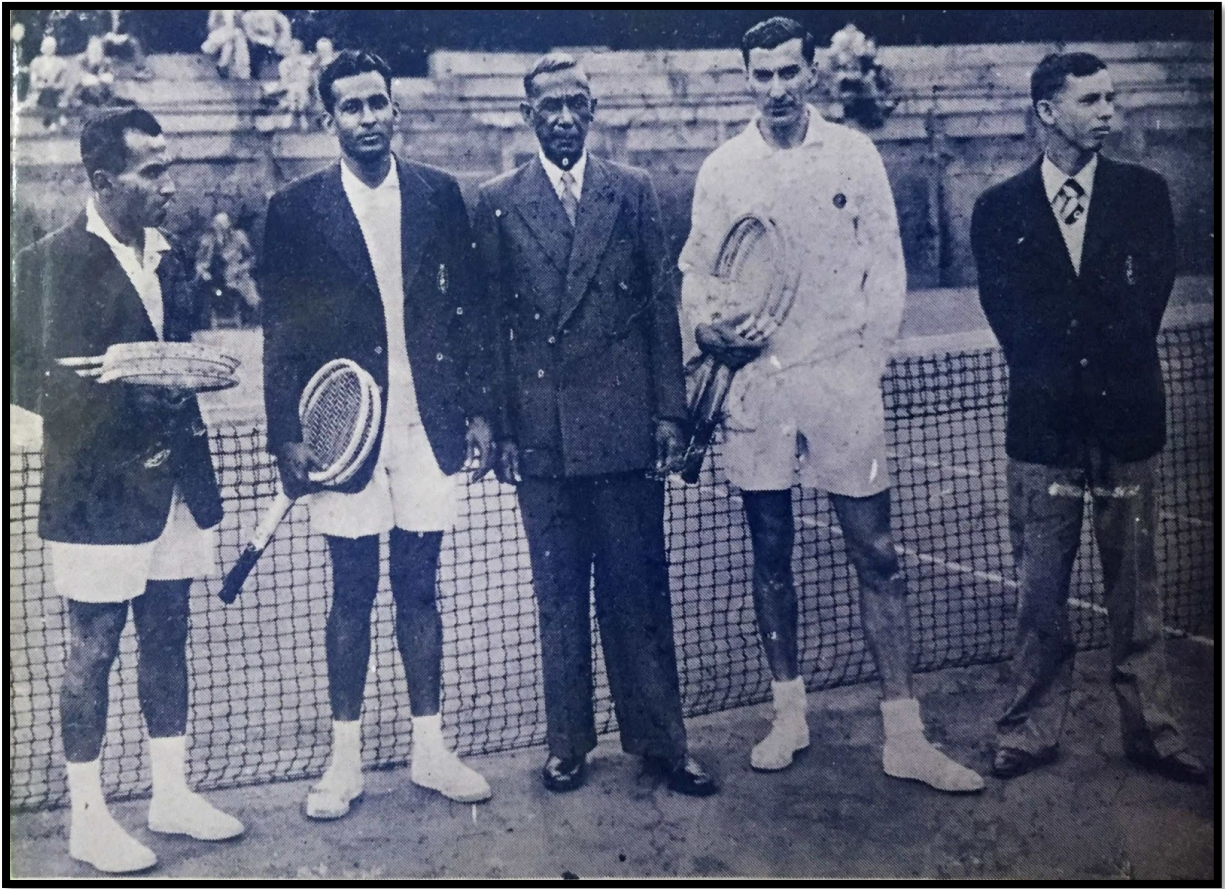
We are both right handers and I was playing on the deuce court, and in one particular rally, the ball came down the middle and I stepped in before Fred and hit a good looking back hand volley for a clear winner.

I felt good until Fred asked me whose forehand shot was it and I said it was his. He then said that no one ever poached a shot off his forehand— not even the great G. P. Hughes—his Wimbledon double partner. He saw my jaw drop.

*Fred then said, ‘**But well done son’!! Much to my relief.**”*

- Rupert

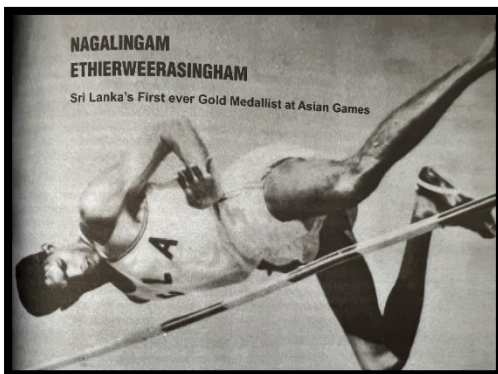
Ceylon's historic first-ever Davis Cup tie in May 1953 in the Hague, Netherlands.



L-R: Percy Ernst, Douglas Fonseka, Lionel Fonseka (Manager), Douglas Scharenguivel and 17-year-old Rupert Ferdinands (extreme right).

A first round elimination from the 1953 Davis Cup kept the nation away for two years until they appeared in the Eastern Asia Zone.

In 1958, the team took their first win in Davis Cup history by defeating Malaysia at Singapore.



Following that Davis Cup victory, Rupert partnered **Bernard Pinto** to win a **Bronze** in the Tennis Doubles at the 1958 Asian Games held in Tokyo, where **Nagalingam Ethirveerasingham** (left) won Gold in the high jump – Sri Lanka's first ever Gold Medal in Athletics.



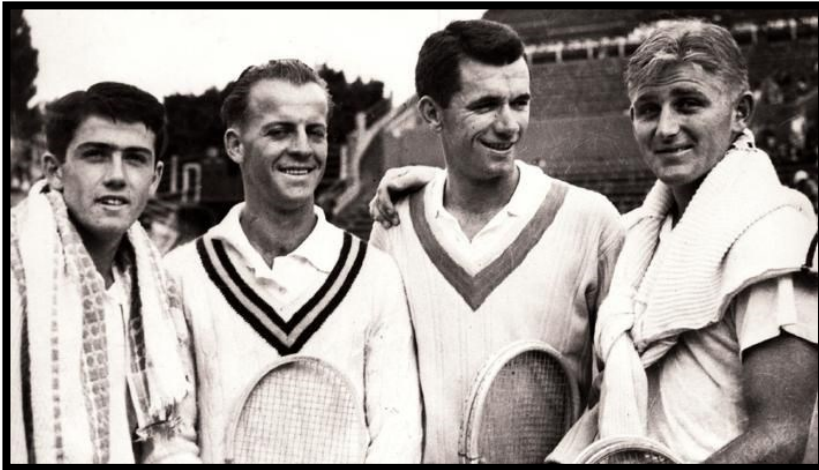
Sep 1954: Bernard Pinto (l) and Rupert Ferdinands (r), with the Men's Doubles Trophy which they won at the Malayan Tennis Championships, held at Kuala Lumpur.

Bernard Pinto was Rupert's doubles partner for several years in Davis Cup ties. He was the son of the famous Oscar Pinto who won many Ceylon National Singles Championships. *"Bernard Pinto and I won the Malaysian Open Doubles Championships in Kuala Lumpur back in the 1950s. Now-a-days it is a very prestigious tournament."* - Rupert



Rupert Ferdinands in action against Kosei Kamo in the Davis Cup Match vs Japan in Tokyo, 26 April 1957.

The **Davis Cup** is the premier international team event in men's tennis. It is run by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and is contested annually between teams from over 150 competing countries, making it the world's largest annual team sporting competition. It is described by the organisers as the "**World Cup of Tennis**", and the winners are referred to as the World Champions. The competition began in 1900 as a challenge between Great Britain and the United States.



**Australia - 1953
Davis Cup
Champions**

(L-R): Ken
Rosewall, Rex
Hartwig, Mervyn
Rose, Lew Hoad.

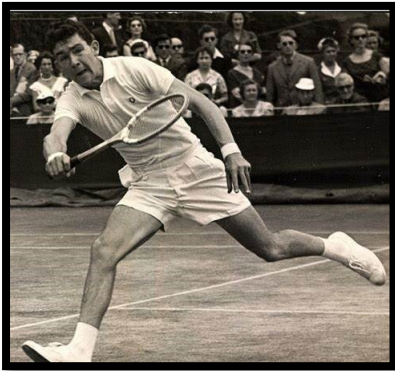
1953 Davis Cup (L – R): Rex Hartwig, Lew Hoad, team captain Harry Hopman, Ken Rosewall and Mervyn Rose of Australia celebrate after being presented with the Davis Cup after defeating the United States team in the



42nd edition of the Davis Cup on 31st December 1953 at the Kooyong Stadium, Melbourne, Australia.

Australia defeated the United States 3 - 2 to win the Davis Cup.

Notable wins



Notable wins in Rupert's career were against Japan's No. 3 R. Kamo, India's A. Amritraj and Premjit Lal, and also Welshman **Michael Davies** (left) as a junior of the same age and who subsequently became Great Britain's No. 1 player (1958-60), Davis Cup player and ITF stalwart.

Rupert and his partner Bernard Pinto defeated India's Anand Amritraj and Gaurav Misra in a five-set thriller 2-6, 7-9, 14-12, 7-5, 6-4 in their 1969 Davis Cup encounter in Colombo.

Toughest Opponent

Rupert considers Indian **Sambu Misra** as the toughest opponent that he faced.

"My most memorable match was also against Sambu Misra at the 1969 National Men's Singles Final, where he led 2 sets to love in the finals of the Sri Lanka Nationals, and I crawled my way back to win the 3rd set, and it was 6 games all in the 4th set, with me on the brink of defeat, when bad light stopped play for the day.

It was a huge mental strain going to bed that night, but I came back to win the 4th set. The 5th set was a breeze as I felt I had broken him down and he had nothing left in his tank!" – Rupert

1969 Ceylon Nationals

Mens Singles Finals – 12 Aug. 1969

Misra has a slight lead...but

OUR RUPERT'S YET IN THE RUNNING

A tenacious fightback saw former Ceylon champion Rupert Ferdinands still in the running for the Men's Open Singles Title against Hyderabad's Sambu Misra. After two hours of touch and go tennis in the gruelling heat, the exciting match could not be continued in the key event of the National Tennis Championships at the CLTA courts, Green Path, yesterday.

When bad light halted play at 6.15 pm Misra led by two to one with the final set to be continued today at 3.15 pm. Misra led 6-3, 6-1, 6-8, 6-6.



A study of Rupert Ferdinands (left) executing a forehand in the Men's Open Singles Final against Indian, S.N. Misra in the National Tennis Championships held at the CLTA courts.

Ferdinands 33, played relaxed tennis to conserve his energy against an opponent 10 years his junior and he did so to his advantage by slowing down the proceedings to suit his own style of play.

Misra who was anxious to finish the match erred against the slower ball placed cunningly by Ferdinands.

Misra won the first two sets with consummate ease at 6-3 and 6-1 before there was a half-hour break during which period he was freshened up with a rub-down and a change of clothes. This break was more advantageous to Misra, but strangely enough it was Ferdinands who benefited.

Remarkable

With two sets down, Ferdinands played remarkable tennis to oust Misra in the third set winning it at 8-6. In this vital set, Ferdinands put everything he had into the game and though his younger opponent came from behind to level terms at 3-3, 4-4, 5-5, Ferdinands dictated terms and then won the set at 8-6.

Both players played initially from the baseline and sent their sweeping shots skimming the sidelines until one surrendered for the want of quick approach to the shot.

It was tennis of high order with the possible winner being the one who can outlast the other in stamina and concentration. Misra took a lead in the fourth set, which was vital for him, at 2-1 but thereafter with some beautifully placed drivers on both flanks Ferdinands scored winners to tie up the score at 6-6 when bad-light halted play.

Ferdinands Wins Singles Title - 13 Aug. 1969

Misra beaten in final

By D.D.N. Selvadurai (The Times of Ceylon)



BOUNCING brewer, Rupert Ferdinands staged a marvellous comeback after being down two sets to beat Hyderabad State Champion Sambu Misra 3-6, 1-6, 8-6, 9-7, 6-1 to win the Ceylon title at the Nationals continued on the CLTA courts yesterday.

Rupert last won in 1963 six years ago. Previous to this Rupert won the national singles title in 1957, so this is his **3rd Ceylon Singles Title** won at intervals of 6 years. SIX seems to be his lucky number!

“Well done Rupert, you certainly gave a fine example of percentage tennis, and above all you showed everyone how to use your head in tennis.”

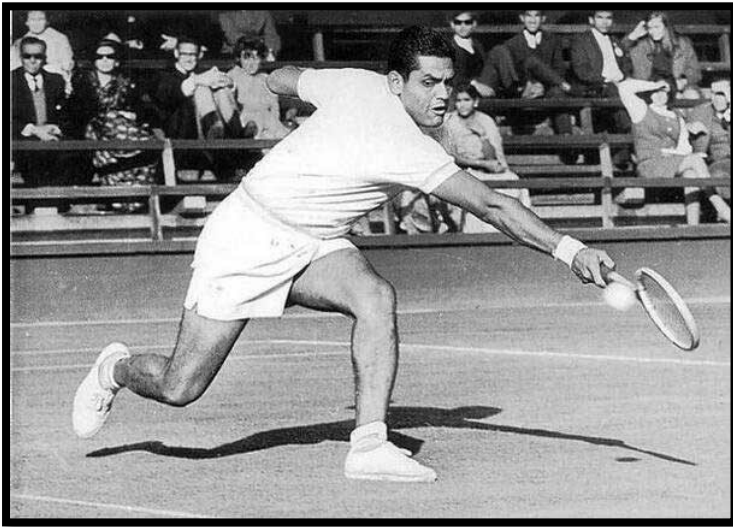
Misra on the other hand, fell beautifully into Ferdinands’ trap, for he was virtually duped into playing a baseline game, much to the liking of Rupert.

Misra essentially an attacking player confined himself to the baseline and when he realised his mistake, it was far too late. When he started to attack he was in two minds - whether to go to the net or stay back – and this confused state of mind caused his defeat. If only he went down attacking it might have been a different story.

Rupert always played safe, and confined his victory to three factors –

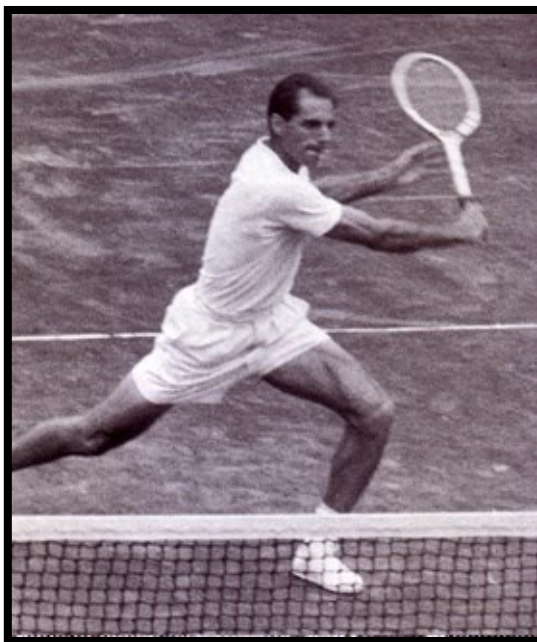
(1) Consistency, (2) Length, (3) Placement.

Other Highlights



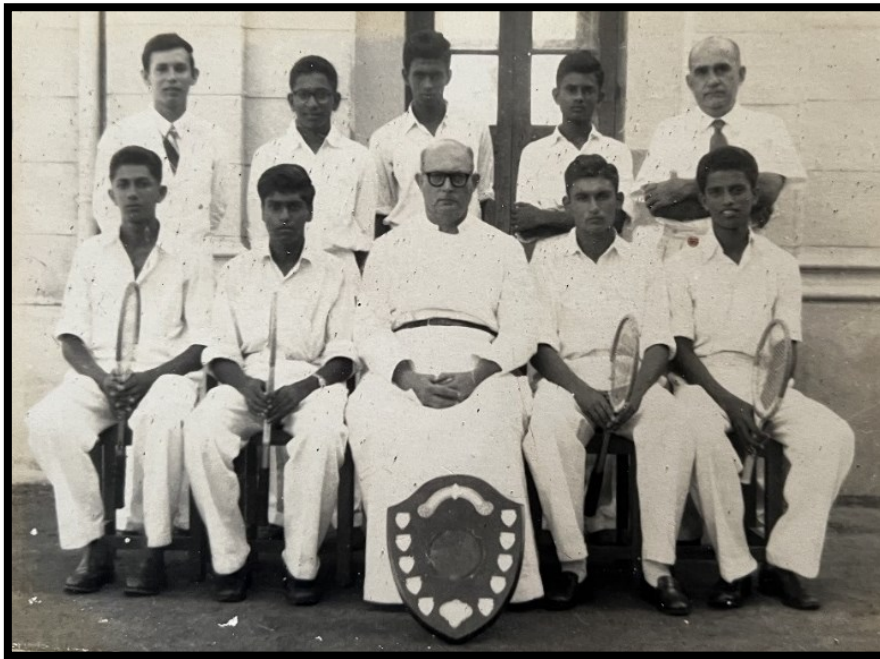
Rupert's other highlights includes having a match point against Canada's No. 1 player **Don Fontana**, and set point against India's **Ramanathan Krishnan** and **Ham Richardson**, who was ranked within the top 5 players in America at the time.

(Above) Ramanathan Krishnan: India's greatest-ever tennis player



(Left): Canadian Davis Cup Player - **Don Fontana** & (Right): American, **Ham Richardson** who achieved the U.S. No. 1 ranking, both in 1956 and 1958. Richardson reached four Grand Slam singles semifinals.

Rupert's first coaching assignment was an instant success - he trained the STC Tennis Team win the 1956 Public Schools Tennis Championship.



STC 1956 Public Schools Champions - Winners of the De Saram Shield.

Standing (L-R): R.W. Ferdinands (Coach), P.S. Kumara, B. Dharmapala, G.N. Perera, Mr. C.H. Davidson (Master in charge).

Seated (L-R): A. Sinnatamby, F.L.N. Senanayake (Capt.), The Warden (Rev. Canon de Saram), M.H. Tissera (Vice Capt.), D.D. Abeysekera.

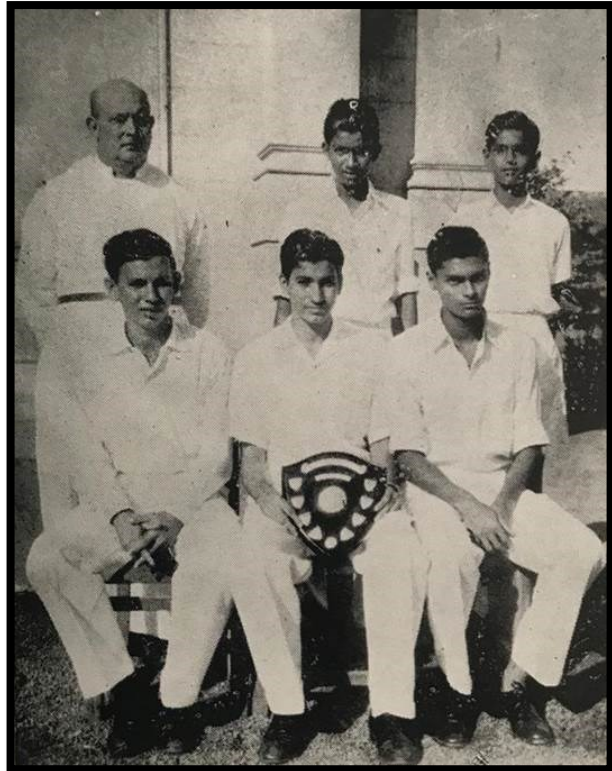
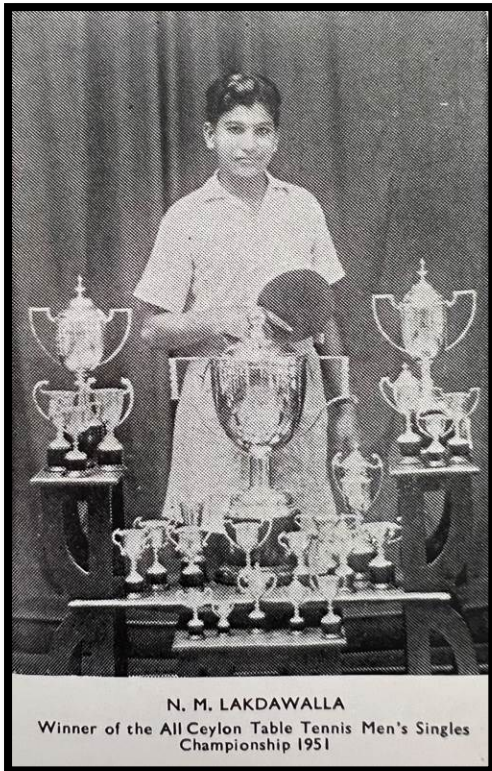
“At University, the Ceylon University Tennis team played in the All-India Inter-University tennis championships in the late 1950s and won the event.

Our team had Two Davis Cup players in the same team - G.N. Perera and myself. So it was no big deal and it was virtually a one-horse race. The Indian Universities put up spirited resistance but they had absolutely no hope!!”

- Rupert

Table Tennis Highlights

Rupert was also a fine table tennis player and was in the College table tennis team with Norshi Lakdawalla as his captain. Norshi won the National Table Tennis singles title when only 14 years old, a phenomenal achievement.



1955 – STC TABLE TENNIS TEAM

WINNERS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIP

Standing (L-R): The Warden (Rev. Canon de Saram), Raja Praesoody, Barclay G. ‘Buddy’ Reid. **Seated (L-R):** Rupert W. Ferdinands, Norshi M. Lakdawalla (Capt.), Ronald J. Reid.

At the Nuwara Eliya table tennis championships held in the 1960s, Rupert beat Charlie Daniel—a National champion many time over—in the semi-finals, producing a shock-wave. Rupert modestly recalls, *“Charlie must have had a bad day as there was no way I could beat him on any other day! However, I should say that his style of play suited me.”*

In Australia, Rupert was a member of a 4- man team which participated in the Victorian “B” Division table tennis championships, along with Dick Schoorman, Buddy Reid and Nimo Ramchand—all of them crack players. *“I was the no. 4 singles player with not much work to do as we had already won the match by the time it was my turn to play. However, in the grand finals, the matches were tied at 2-all, and it was up to me, playing the 4th singles of the day to pull the team through which I did!”*

- Rupert

HEAD PREFECTS

1956 R. W FERDINANDS

STC Head Prefect - 1956



Seated (L-R): R.L. Tambyraja, W.T. Ellawala, D. Kandiah, R.P. Gooneratne, **R.W. Ferdinands (Head Prefect)**, The Warden (Rev. Canon de Saram), C.N.G. de Silva, B.A. de Silva, L.K. Amarasuriya, M.P.S. Wijeyasinghe, N.M.W. de Alwis.

Standing (L-R): S. Kalugaha, M.H. Tissera, L.W. Rasiyah, D.D. Abeyssekera, C.R. Gunaratnam, R.J. Reid, G.G. Thambiah, E.G. Jacotine, E.J.P. de Silva, S. Wijesiri, M.I.M. Buhari, P.H.A.N. Dias.

"I used to attend many local dances and loved to dance the rock and roll, but on one occasion, I won the Baila competition... On another occasion I won the University Chess championship... Very few of my friends know even today that I was a Brewer at the Brewery in Nuwara Eliya. I was trained in England for over a year in 1962-63 and returned as an Assistant Brewer.

Sometime before I migrated to Australia I was appointed Acting Head Brewer, and responsible for brewing, bottling, canning, beer stocks and distribution of beer to wholesale and retail outlets. I was also responsible for the labour force."

- Rupert

Picturesque Dimbulla



Rupert's second love was cricket and while stationed in Nuwara –Eliya was a member of the Dimbulla Athletic and Cricket club (above, better known as the *Radella Club*) representing them in the Sara trophy as a wicket keeper (with a tennis eye). He later played for the Colombo Cricket Club under the captaincy of Laddie Outschoorn.

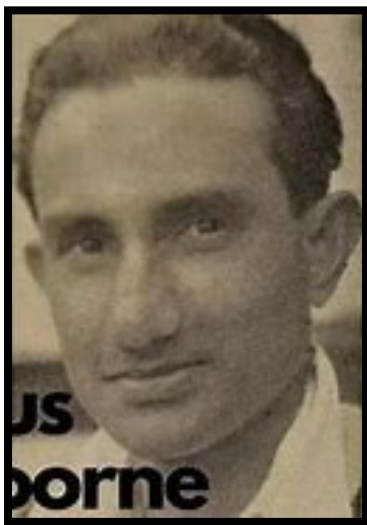
Biggest Regret

Recalling his days at College, Rupert mentioned that his biggest regret was not having played in a Royal-Thomian.

At the beginning of the 1955/56 cricket season Rupert had caught the eye of Mr. Lassie Abeywardena (1st XI assistant coach) when he scored a sparkling half-century for Stone House against a strong Buck House bowling attack that was led by Thomian skipper and classy off spinner Dan Piachaud. Buck House also had the likes of Ronald Reid, Asoka Wikramanayake in their team. He had belted Piachaud effortlessly for a few sixes out of the 'small club' cricket ground.

Soon after Lassie approached Rupert and requested that he attends 1st XI practice. However, when Rupert mentioned to Lassie that he needed a day or two in the week to attend tennis practice Lassie would not compromise. Tennis being his first love and being a Davis Cup player Rupert was extremely disappointed and had no choice but to forgo his dream of playing 1st XI for College and a possible debut in a Big Match at the Colombo Oval.

His talents as a smart wicket keeper was discovered several years later while playing in a domestic tournament in the up-country of Ceylon. His eye-hand coordination and footwork drills from tennis made him take to wicket keeping like a duck to water. Such was his natural ability that even the former Ceylon National Coach and Worcestershire professional, Laddie Outschoorn, under whose captaincy Rupert played for Colombo Cricket Club, was highly impressed!



* Ladislaus 'Laddy' Outschoorn (l) made his debut for Worcestershire in 1946 and played First-Class Cricket till 1959.

He is the first Sri Lankan to cross 10,000 runs in First-Class Cricket. He was appointed National Cricket Coach of Ceylon in 1966.

[In Australia](#)

On arrival in Australia in August 1972, Rupert served as an apprentice tennis coach, and a year later he had no difficulty at all in qualifying as a Level 2 coach in 1973, and subsequently being accredited as a Level 3 coach.

In 1975, Rupert was awarded the 'General Coaches Education Certificate' by the Department of Youth, Sport and Education of Victoria, Australia. Rupert was a Member of the Tennis Coaches Victoria (TCAV) Board of Management for over 15 years.

During this time, he acted as Secretary of the TCAV during the temporary absence of the Secretary and was also its Vice President at one time.

He was invited to speak at National Tennis Coaches Seminars in Australia, and wrote several articles on various aspects of coaching that appeared in Australia's TENNIS Magazine from 1985-1989.

In 1989, Rupert was appointed to a 5-man National Technical Committee for standardizing stroke techniques for teaching purposes for Tennis Coaches around Australia under the guidance of the National Director of Coaching. In the 1990s, he was sponsored by the Australian Government and the International Tennis Federation (ITF) on two separate occasions to proceed to Sri Lanka and conduct training courses for tennis coaches based on the Australian system.

Rupert's greatest contribution to the TCAV was undoubtedly his dedication to managing the TCAV Training School for Tennis Coaches for over 15 years as Manager and Chairman of its Examination Panel.

During this time, his Training School committee introduced several improvements that led to high standards in the teaching of theory and practical components. This, of course, was in addition to his normal 9-5 daytime job as Projects Manager at Standards Australia specialising in the medical and dental areas, and his own private coaching at several local clubs. Time for family life was always at a premium!

“As Projects Manager at Standards Australia, I was responsible for writing medical and dental standards with the help of technical committees, and worked closely with the Therapeutic Good Administration (TGA).

*At one time, I was Secretary of an International Standards Committee (ISO) and travelled overseas yearly wherever the ISO committee met. When the ISO committee met in Finland, I took the opportunity to travel north into the arctic circle. It was a strange feeling to be standing next to a board which said, “You are now entering the arctic circle”!! This was in a town inside the arctic circle which had its own Santa Claus post office, and I sent a post card to my wife from that post office. It was stamped “**Santa Claus**” post office!!”*

- Rupert

Santa Claus Post Office at Arctic Circle



The Santa Claus Post Office is open every day, all year round!

Every year Santa Claus receives around half a million letters to his post office at the Arctic Circle and the letters arrive from children and adults all over the world.

Greater Honours

On 16th July 2008, Rupert Ferdinands was honoured as a **National Sporting Hero** of Sri Lanka by the Ministry of Sports, Sri Lanka for his achievements in tennis both in Sri Lanka and abroad.

A sovereign gold medal and certificate was presented to him, by President Mahinda Rajapakse, for his love of tennis and pride in representing the motherland internationally as one of Sri Lanka's "Sporting Heroes"



Ferdinands was one of Four former National Tennis Champions and Davis Cup "stars" to receive this prestigious award.

The others were Bernard Pinto, Wendy Molligoda & Ranjani Jayasuriya.



*** Rupert has also been a loyal member of STC OBA in Melbourne for many decades actively participating in activities especially at the annual Royal-Thomasian cricket matches.

Hall of Fame



On 28th November 2010, because of his pro-active attitude and programs over the years, enthusiasm and dedication to the tennis coaching profession, genuine hard work, a lifetime contribution to the game of tennis, and been instrumental in the success of many young tennis players and coaches in Victoria, Rupert was inducted into the **Hall Of Fame of the Tennis Coaches Australia – Victoria** at an Awards Night held at Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club. A very prestigious award and a rare honour indeed!

Tennis Coaches Australia (TCA) Inc

Since 1956, Tennis Coaches Australia (TCA), formerly the TCAV, has provided support for education, training, promotion and management of tennis within Victoria. From 2023, the TCA has become a national body that supports and promotes coaches Australia wide.

TCA is steeped in history and their Honour Board celebrates the outstanding contributions of tennis coaches within Victoria - from their founding pioneers who established PTAV in February 1956, to their inaugural Hall of Fame inductees, Legends, Life Members and more.

THE FIRST 12 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES were Norman F Cahill, Don Cameron, Ron Cummins, Leo Guiney, John Hillebrand, Bill Kucks, Denis Lemke, Ian Occleshaw, Bryan Slattery, Keith Rogers and Don Tregonning.

TENNIS COACHES AUSTRALIA - VICTORIA INCORPORATED						
ESTABLISHED AS PTAV IN 1956						
HONOUR BOARD						
PRESIDENTS	LIFE MEMBERS	HALL OF FAME	HALL OF FAME	LEGENDS	GEORGE GILMOUR MEMORIAL TENNIS VICTORIA /TCAV CLUB COACH OF THE YEAR	COACH OF THE YEAR
FRANK SEDGMAN IAN OCCLESHAW* STAN BIRCH NEIL GUINEY RON CUMMINS* NEIL TOYNE IAN OCCLESHAW ALAN STONE PETER MURPHY* JUDY BULL PETER OWEN JULIE FIDLER	IAN OCCLESHAW* GEORGE GILMOUR* JUDY BULL PETER HUBBLE ROBERT PETERSON PETER OWEN JULIE FIDLER	NORMAN F CAHILL DON CAMERON RON CUMMINS* LEO GUINEY* ALBERT JOHN HILLEBRAND* BILL KUCKS DENIS LEMKE* IAN OCCLESHAW* KEITH ROGERS* BRYAN SLATTERY* DON TREGONNING LES WOOD-WILSON*	CHERYL HEWITT WILL COGHLAN BRIAN BEERS BRIAN CONNOR COLIN PRICE RUPERT FERDINANDS PETER MURPHY* LOIS PLOWMAN COLIN DAVIS IAN BARCLAY VICTOR EKE LARRY DEMPSTER TERRY STONE ELIZABETH PEERS GLENN BUSBY	IAN OCCLESHAW* DON TREGONNING NORMAN F. CAHILL IAN BARCLAY	2000 PAUL KLEVERLAAN 2001 STEPHEN STORER 2002 ROBERT PETERSON 2003 COLIN J. PRICE 2004 KIM DAVIS 2005 SUE SALIBA 2006 TERRY STONE 2007 NICK BOARD GREG GUNN 2008 TERRY PAYTON 2009 MARK SHEPPARD 2010 WES HORSKINS 2011 PETER OWEN	1996 VICTOR EKE CHERYL HEWITT 1997 LARRY DEMPSTER ELIZABETH PEERS 1998 CRAIG TYZZER CYNTHIA DOERNER 1999 STEVEN FOOT JULIE GOLIGHTLY 2000 PETER JOYCE LOIS PLOWMAN 2001 MICHAEL BAROCH 2002 AWARD DEFERRED TO BIENNIALY 2003 MARK HARTNETT 2005 MICHAEL ROBERTSON 2007 IAN BARCLAY 2009 CHRIS KACHEL
	PTAV PIONEERS First meeting at Kooyong Feb 1956 FRANK SEDGMAN IAN OCCLESHAW* KEVIN PARKER DON TREGONNING KEITH ROGERS* KEITH HARRISON	TCAV ROOKIE BEST ASSISTANT 25 YRS & UNDER 2011 GISELLE DE BARTOLO 2012 CHRIS FIDLER 2013 REGINA VIRGO 2014 TIM SHACKLETON 2015 EBONY MILES MICHAEL MATTSCHOSS* 2016 JORDAN WRIGHT 2017 JAMES SHEPPARD 2018 DANIEL MASSA	TCAV RISING STAR OUTSTANDING COACH 30 yrs & UNDER 2009 MATTHEW SYMONS 2010 MATT GREGORY 2011 MARC SOPHOLIS 2012 DANIELLE BORLE 2013 AIDAN FITZGERALD 2014 CHRISTOPHER SINGH 2015 LAWRENCE GILENO 2016 LEWIS MILES 2017 RYAN MEEHAN 2018 LUKE DEVLIN	GEORGE GILMOUR MEMORIAL TROPHY TCAV CLUB COACH OF THE YEAR 2012 WARREN MAHER 2013 CRAIG HASLAM 2014 VICKY LEE ADRIAN MUSCILLO 2015 SHANE SCRUTTON 2016 DANE NEBEL 2017 KANE DEWHURST 2018 PAUL VASSALLO	IAN OCCLESHAW MEMORIAL AWARD 2014 RON CARTER* 2016 FRANK SEDGMAN 2017 CEDRIC MASON	
						<small>* deceased</small>

Rupert Ferdinands appears on 'Tennis Coach Australia - Honour Board' alongside some of the most revered and respected coaches of Australia.

Rupert's Advice to Youngsters

I asked Rupert as to what tips he would give the current crop of youngsters aspiring to make it to the top. And is it possible under the current professional era to combine sports and academics.

*“Hard work on and off the court with emphasis on proper practice—not just hitting a ball in any old way and feel good about it just because it went over the net! For me, **practice does not make perfect but perfect practice does.** Dedication to the game is also important.*

It would not be possible under the current professional era to combine both. I had to go to school, then University which occupied something like 8 hours a day from Monday to Friday. That left me with just 2 hours a day for tennis practice. That is a joke. The true professional practices under the guidance of the coach close to 8 hours a day which includes Gym work and track work—just the opposite of what I did. No comparison and it was a losing battle all the way.”

- Rupert

Heart of Gold - An Important Episode in Rupert's life

“I have been a volunteer for a well-known charitable organisation for almost 10 years and was put in charge of organising and distributing bread to the less disadvantaged in the local area on a weekly basis. On one of my visits to an elderly lady living alone, she took me to her fridge, and to my utter amazement, all she had in the fridge was a bottle of water—absolutely nothing else. It was a sickening feeling. I told her I will be back.

I went over to the nearby grocery store, and using the organisation's food voucher which can be used for emergency purposes, I bought a whole basket full of non-perishable food, and when I gave it to her, the look on her face said it all!

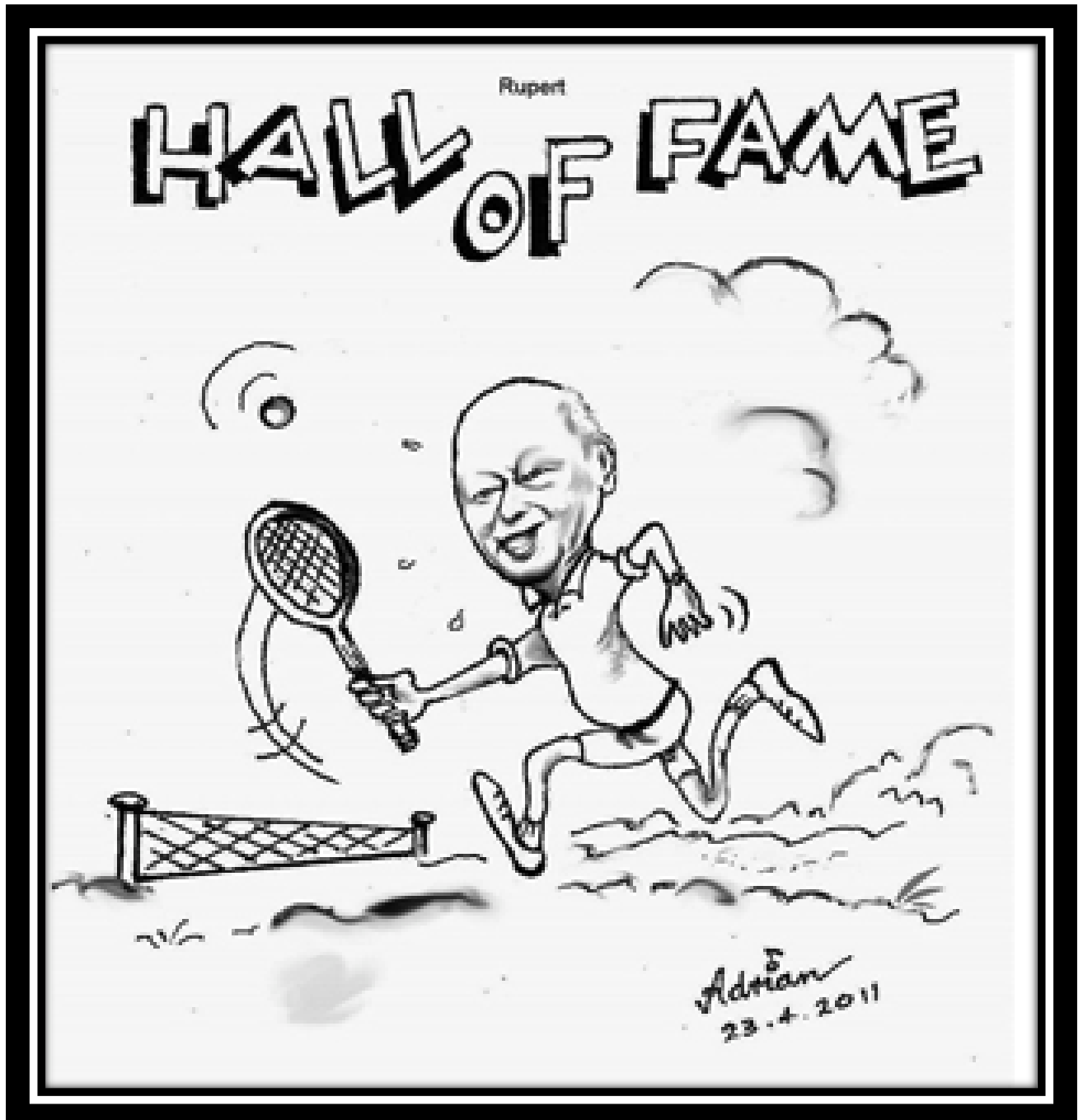
For me, as a Volunteer, it gave me a whole heap of satisfaction in helping the needy.

In May 2021, I was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation by the same charitable organisation in recognition of my contribution to the life and work of the Organisation, and thanking me for looking after, planning and organising the bread distribution on a weekly basis....I was merely doing what I had to do”

– Rupert

Rupert plays **Contract Bridge** regularly and was promoted a few years ago to a **State Master** with the Australian Bridge Federation.

His friends regard him as an **accomplished pianist** (he has been playing the piano since he was 10 years old) and is often asked to play at the Sunday morning church service as an emergency.



Brilliant sketch of Rupert drawn by his brother Adrian

Rupert & Tammy's Delightful Children



(L-R): Tracy, and Twins - Andre & Natasha.

Tracy and Andre are qualified Level-1 Tennis coaches with Tennis Coaches Australia—Victoria, but never really did any coaching because of heavy work demands at their 9-5 office jobs, and other commitments.



Rupert spends his happy retirement in Rowville, Melbourne, with his wife Tamara ('Tammy' nee Wambeek).

Rupert and Tammy celebrated their 58th wedding anniversary last year (November 2023).

May the Divine continue to Bless them both with many more Happy and Healthy years together.

*My Deepest Gratitude to Rupert & Tammy Ferdinands, Anil Abeywickrema and an article published by the STC Centenary Group.

- Ravi Rudra, Auckland, April 2024