Eric Marsh 1940-2017

November 2017: The RFA is sad to report the death, at the age of 77, of Eric Marsh. One of a generation of leading Fives players to emerge from St. Dunstan's College in the late 1950s, Eric was Amateur Singles Champion in 1960, 1961, 1962 and 1963. He was three times runner-up: in 1959 to Jonathan Smith; in 1967 to John Watkinson; and in 1968 to fellow Old Dunstonian John Howe.

Eric was a winner of the Cyriax Cup for Amateur Doubles in 1965 with David Gardner, another of the fine players to be produced by the College. He also was the winner of both the Singles and Doubles (with Stuart Tovey) at the first Universities Championships in 1960, representing Bristol University.

Eric was one of only two players ever to hold the Universities title and the Amateur Singles title (as the National Singles was known in his day) in the same season.

Eric was a schoolmaster. As master-in-charge of Fives at Alleyn's School in Dulwich in the 1960s Eric was instrumental in setting David Hebden and his partner George Baker on the road to their many successes.

Eric was last seen by the Fives-playing community at the Memorial Service for Rick Wilson earlier in 2017. There, as always, Eric proudly wore his RFA tie.

The Fives Federation Newsletter of December 2017 contained the following tribute: There is no doubt that with his superb fitness, his tenacious retrieving style, his mental toughness and his love of the game Eric would have continued to perform at the highest level for many years, but, sadly for Fives, he moved away from the London, where he had taught and coached at Alleyn's, and was lost to the game. It was cricket that he turned his great talents to, playing in the Shropshire County side that won the Minor Counties title in 1973. He played Club cricket well into his fifties and played a significant role in the administration of veteran cricket at county level.

Eric (front right) with fellow Old Dunstonians in 1959

Eric (centre) with Paul Coker and Dick Bulgin at the RFA Dinner in 2007