

Russell Algie

Russell Algie was New Zealand Champion six times between 1939 and 1951. He also won two NZ Men's Doubles titles partnered by his brother Afton, and two Mixed Doubles titles, one of them (1952), with Barbara Williams who later became his wife.

His record would have been even more impressive but for the suspension of NZ Championships during World War 2.

Russell was noted for his fast and elegant footwork, left-handed defensive game and finishing backhand flick - and for his impeccable manners and perfect temperament.



He started playing as a student at Waitaki Boys' High and later won the Otago Open singles title 11 times between 1937 and 1948.

On a tour of Australia with the New Zealand team in 1939 he defeated the New South Wales Champion, and whilst serving with the army in the Pacific he was an easy winner of the Pacific Islands Championships.

He had the distinction of being the first New Zealander to compete at a World Championship (London, 1948), where he reached the third round before losing to a former United States champion. In 1949 he played for NZ against world greats Viktor Barna and Richard Bergmann when they toured New Zealand.

A real man of sport, Russell excelled at cricket, rugby and boxing. He played golf with the remarkable handicap of 2 and was a Life Member of North Shore's Pupuke Golf Club. For 25 years he owned and operated a sports shop in Takapuna.

Fellow-inductee Alan Tomlinson speaks fondly of him: "Russell will be remembered as a perfect gentleman, a fine sportsman in every sense of the word."

Russell passed away in March, 2005, aged 84.



National Titles:

New Zealand Open

Men's Singles - 1939, 40, 45, 47, 49, 51

Men's Doubles - 1939, 40

Mixed Doubles - 1949, 52

Over 45 Men's Singles - 1969

South Island Open

Men's Singles - 1945

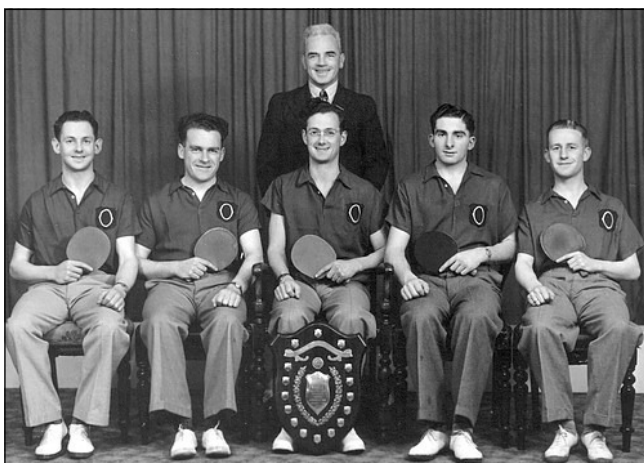
Men's Doubles - 1945

Mixed Doubles - 1945

Russell Algie continued

Wins While Awol

In the Otago Association's 50th Anniversary booklet Russell tells how he went AWOL during the war to play in the first rounds of the Otago Champs and, being found out, was confined to barracks. However he went over the fence and won the final and headlines in the next morning's paper read "ALGIE RETAINS TITLE". It wasn't long before he was in front of the Colonel, who said that it was a very good job for Russell that he hadn't got his glasses with him that day otherwise he would have stood a good chance of a court-martial!



(Above): **1948 NZ Inter-Association Teams Winners - Otago Association - Kean Shield in Dunedin**

(back) **C O'Driscoll** (Manager)
(front) L/R: **N M Brown, W J Fogarty, Russell Algie** (Captain) **V N Brightwell, L Howe**



(Above): **NZ Team Australian Tour 1939**

L/R: **Russ Algie** (O),
E Boniface (W),
A M C Spooner
(Manager) (A),
K G Cantlay Capt. (A),

(Below) **NZ Men's team V Barna & Bergmann of England - Christchurch 1949 - 3rd test**
L/R: **J H Lauder, L M Wilson, Richard Bergmann, Viktor Barna, R A Algie, H Chapman.**

