

Keith Keane served Table Tennis for over 50 years as a player, coach and umpire. His dedication to Table Tennis, since the early 1960s is remarkable.

Keith was born on the 24th November 1928. A keen table tennis player, Keith joined the Coburg Table Tennis Club in 1958. It was not long before he started coaching the juniors and running the junior training sessions. Keith said "the beauty of the sport" attracted him and his first coach was the legendary Harry Venna.

Keith teamed with Prisca Rosario to run a Saturday junior coaching program at the former home of table tennis at Albert Park. This group commenced in the early 1970's and run for 20 years. But it is the Thursday junior program at Coburg that he has conducted for over 50 years that has given Keith the most pleasure, plus it allowed him to form a close friendship with the Club Manager for many years, Bob Watters. Keith's coaching was a positive influence on new players. The best player Keith coached was Denis Makaling (2011 member of the Coburg Hall of Fame). Keith loved Dennis's soft hands and the fact from an early age he had good touch. Other good players / students of Keith's include - Tony Evans, Debbie Wilson (nee Evans), Nadia & Lory Bisiach, David Brand, Alois Rosario, & Keryn Kumar (nee Keane).

Keith was a long time A2 and A3 Coburg player. He first played A1 grade at the age of 37. In his later years Keith loved playing the veterans events and career highlights include - Australian veteran number 2 ranked player in the over 75's. He was a member of the Victorian over 70, over 75+ and over 80 years of age teams. He won medals at Australian veterans championships.

He was a regular player with the Keenager social table tennis group at Coburg. When once asked, *what's the reason for your longevity?* Keith responded, *"Kids keep me young and this is a good family sport. As for the Saturday squad, it is good fun with great coaching. I love to be part of the program."*

Alois Rosario remembers Keith:

"My earliest memories are of being in the coaching group with Keith in the early 70s at Albert Park where he helped a lot of juniors of the time to develop their games.

He was one of the coaches that ran the Saturday afternoon coaching that was able to pass on the basic skills of the game but also the passion for the game."

Alois Rosario

**National Head Coach - Para
Table Tennis Australia**

- Keith was a Victorian State Umpire around 1972/1973.
- Keith was one of the first to be accredited a Level 3 coach when VTTA introduced the accreditation.
- Keith coached juniors at Albert Park for 20 years from early 1970s to 1990's.
- Keith coached juniors at Coburg Table Tennis Club from 1958 to 2018 (Thursday night and Saturday morning training). He also coached players of all ages and standards.
- Keith served on the Coburg Table Tennis Club committee for many years. Meeting records note he was first mentioned as serving on the committee in 1976; and last mentioned as serving on the committee in 2009. Note that Keith's title was 'Club Coach'.
- Keith was awarded the Coburg Table Tennis Club 2011 Service Award.
- Keith was awarded Table Tennis Australia's 2021 National Volunteer's Award - 50 Years of Service to Table Tennis.

Keith passed away in February 2023.

