

## VALE

### TOM BRUCE

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Tom Bruce. Tom was a loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He was a wonderful family man who encouraged everyone to participate in the family sport of waterskiing.

Tom accepted many roles in his beloved sport.

Tom was President of the NSW Water Ski Federation, President of the Australian Water Ski Federation, Divisional Director of the AWWF Ski Racing Division and as a member of the Bennett, Bruce and Cole trio created Region V NWSRA (the Australian branch of the USA NWSRA).

Tom built excellent relationships with government agencies at local, regional, state and national levels. He encouraged everyone to acknowledge the excellent skills required in the diverse divisions of our sport

Tom was instrumental in ensuring that effective coaching programs were developed and implemented in all facets of water skiing.

Tom also created the position of Australian team coach for Australian representative teams competing in international competitions.

Tom embraced competitive water skiing towing his children Karen, Stephen and Graham to many wins. He became known as one of the best Marathon drivers in Australia -an outstanding honour given that the courses were arduous and very long with a goal of arriving exactly on the allocated time, if not, you incurred a one-point penalty for every second that you arrived after your allocated ETA. With his son Stephen skiing and his son Graham observing Tom often crossed the line accruing no points lost and was part of a legendary three-way tie at the Australian Speed and Marathon Championships.

When not driving his boat "Dads" #65 for his family, Tom saw his boat as a tool to help others. He frequently towed skiers who wanted to "have-a-go" or handed his boat to other competitors so that they would not miss out on their event.

He was the "Mr. Get It Done" at venues where he would be helping to set up areas, creating missing equipment, encouraging everyone and always ready to support the sport physically, financially and emotionally.

Tom was a visionary and as soon as he became involved in competitive water skiing, he thought of ways to improve our sport and to promote it.

Tom was instrumental in obtaining excellent insurance policies for the sport.

Tom built excellent relationships with government agencies at local, regional, state and national levels.

He created effective, fair national and international rule books which still form the bases of many national and international rule books.

He implemented standard operating procedures, improved safety procedures and worked hard to obtain a purpose-built rescue boat manned by qualified personnel.

When equipment was needed Tom organised enjoyable fund-raising events and made “friendly phone calls” to cover any shortfalls.

Tom had a heart of gold. He cared about everyone and was very sensitive to the feelings of others. He supported everyone to be physically and mentally well. He was the quiet guardian angel who saw someone in need and acted immediately.

Tom was a peacemaker and aimed to ensure that the sport of water skiing was safe, inclusive and fun. He was a great mentor with a gentle loving nature, he will be dearly missed.

Tom always referred to his family as his greatest achievement. To every member of his family, we thank you for sharing him with us and making our lives so much better.