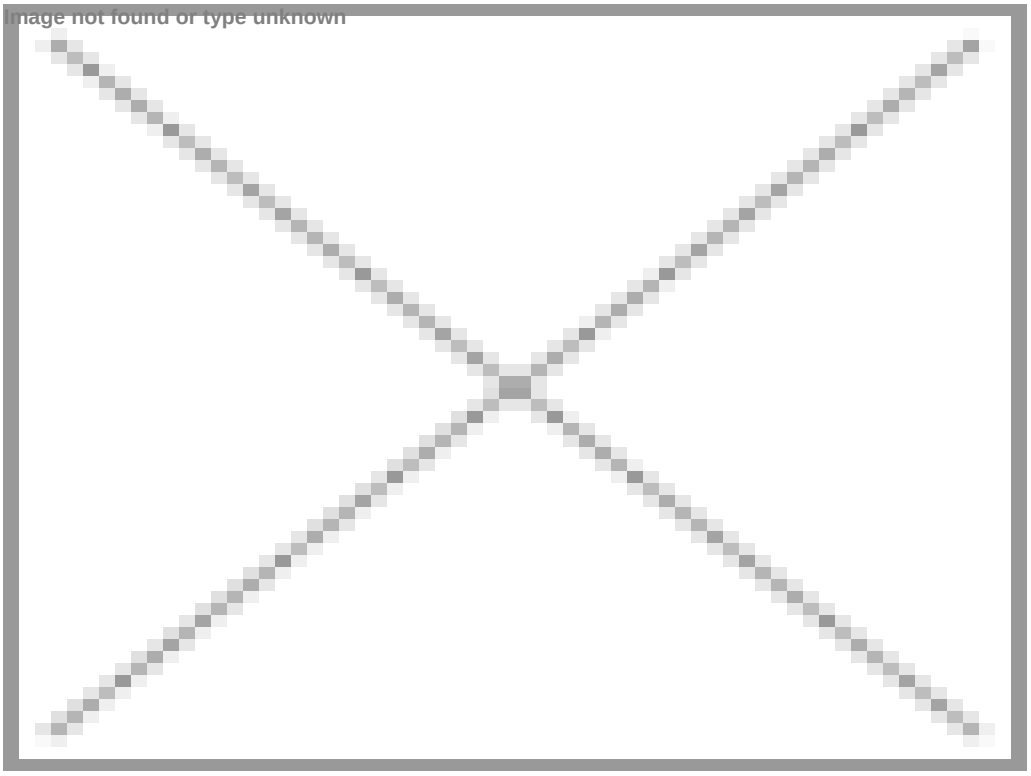
27 SEP 2022

TRIBUTE TO JOHN PENNELL OAM (1935-2022)



The Modern Pentathlon community in Australia, Oceania and around the world is mourning the recent passing of John Pennell, a lifelong supporter and advocate for the sport.

John was a UIPM Executive Board Member, President of the Oceania Confederation and a Life Member of Modern Pentathlon Australia.

He is remembered by the Australian pentathlon community for a remarkable contribution which extended from the grassroots, where he encouraged athletes and willingly pitched in to help run competitions, to national and international level. His service was recognised with one of Australia's highest honours, the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM).

An accomplished rider himself, John won many events at state level in Australia. It was from there that his passion for Modern Pentathlon blossomed. He was a judge in the equestrian section of the Modern Pentathlon competition at the Melbourne 1956 Olympic Games.

The Pennell family were synonymous with the sport in Australia and two of John’s three children, Jason and Mark, competed in Modern Pentathlon.

UIPM President Dr Klaus Schormann led the tributes by saying: “As President of the Modern Pentathlon Union of Australia and the Oceania Confederation, John’s influence stretched right across the region and the wider world.

“He was a stable pillar of our global movement who made friends everywhere he went. We first met at the UIPM 1984 Congress, and I never will forget the UIPM 1985 World Championships in Melbourne, where he organised a super competition followed a week later by the Champion of Champions in Sydney.

“John brought a deep knowledge of financial management to our movement. In Australia, his development work paved the way for unforgettable moments such as Kitty Chiller becoming Australia’s first female Olympian in Sydney 2000 and Chloe Esposito winning Olympic gold at Rio 2016.

“He was a great person who served our sporting movement for more than 50 years and will be missed across our global community."

Oceania Confederation President, Kitty Chiller AM, also paid a personal tribute to an administrator who was pivotal to her becoming Australia’s first female Olympic pentathlete.

She said: "John was a larger-than-life figure in the Australian Modern Pentathlon community for many decades. He was there at the very first competition I did in 1982 and was instrumental in encouraging me and many, many other young athletes to participate in the sport.

“He was always willing to lend a hand at events and was equally at home standing in the middle of the warm-up ring as he was at the board table, where he contributed much to the administration of the sport. John will remain in the hearts and minds of many Australian modern pentathletes.”