



Gordon Rowling

Gordon Douglas Rowling played his croquet at the remote club of Riwaka in the Nelson Association, but this did not prevent him from winning national titles and international honours.

He won the NZ Open twice and was runner up four times. While in England in 1956 with the NZ test team, he won the Mixed Doubles Championship, a Silver Medal and played in the President's Cup.

Surprisingly he was not selected for the 1963 NZ MacRobertson Shield team nor the South Island Representative side. However, he did fill in as a last minute replacement when England played the South Island at Nelson. One would have expected him to be placed at number six in the team, but he played England's number two Pat Cotter. No doubt he faced the challenge in true Rowling style, right trouser leg tucked into his sock as he played side style, cigarette in the corner of his mouth and Panama hat firmly set in place. His was the only match the South Island side won.

In addition to winning the NZ Open in 1965 he also won the Men's Championship and the Best Eight. He formed a strong partnership with Jean Jarden and they won the NZ Doubles title in 1967, 68, 69 and 71. He was a member of the 1969 NZ MacRobertson test team who played in Australia where in a one day match he inflicted the only defeat Nigel Aspinall from England received throughout the tour.

1974 was one of Gordon's best seasons: he won the NZ Men's Championship and reached the Open final where he lost to Roger Murfitt in an excellent match. His shooting was outstanding and his breaks played with great precision. As a member of the NZ MacRobertson test team, he won five of his six singles matches. In partnership with John Prince he won the British Doubles Championship.

He dearly wanted to see New Zealand win the MacRobertson Shield and gave encouragement and support to up and coming players. At Westport in 1979, grimly ignoring the elements, he sat outside, rain dripping off his hat, watching New Zealand defeat Great Britain in the opening test match, and those who knew him well were spurred on by his presence.

Achievements:

- *NZ Open Champion*
(1965, 1956)
- *NZ Open Doubles*
(1971, 1969, 1968, 1967)
- *MacRobertson Shield Team*
(1974, 1969, 1957)
- *Men's AC Champion*
(1974, 1965, 1956, 1955)
- *Silver Tray Invitation*
(1972, 1966)
- *North Island AC Doubles*
(1976)
- *South Island AC Champion*
(1963, 1949)
- *South Island AC Doubles*
(1970, 1967)

Representative Matches:

- *vs Scotland* (1974)

- *vs Great Britain* (1969)

Other international honours:

- *CA Open Doubles*

(1975)

- *CA Mixed Doubles*

(1957)