

= Bob Windle =

Robert George " Bob " Windle (born 7 November 1944) is an Australian freestyle swimmer of the 1960s , who won four Olympic medals , including an individual gold medal . Windle won the 1500 m freestyle and took bronze in the 4 × 100 m freestyle relay at the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo , and silver and bronze in the 4 × 200 m and 4 × 100 m freestyle relays respectively at the 1968 Summer Olympics . Known for his versatility , he is the only male swimmer to represent Australia at the Olympics in all freestyle distances from 100 m to 1500 m . During his career , Windle set six world records and won six Commonwealth Games gold medals . He won 19 Australian championships in all distances from 220 yd to 1650 yd .

Growing up in eastern Sydney , Windle was trained by Frank Guthrie from the age of 12 . Windle 's first major swimming competition was the 1960 Australian Championships . Aged 15 , his second @-@ place finish in the 1650 yd freestyle earned him a place on the team for the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome . However , the Australian coaches only took him along to gain experience and he did not compete . He won his first national title in 1961 ? the 1650 yd freestyle ? and claimed the 220 ? 440 ? 1650 yd treble in 1962 . Windle made his international debut at the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Perth , winning gold in the 4 × 220 yd freestyle and silver and bronze in the 1650 and 440 yd freestyle respectively . In 1963 , he won four individual national titles , adding the 880 yd event to the successful defence of his three titles . He won three individual titles in 1964 and proceeded to the Tokyo Olympics where he was eliminated in the heats of the 400 m freestyle after attempting to save energy for the final . In response , Windle took an aggressive approach in the 1500 m and set Olympic records in the heats and final to win gold . He added a bronze in the 4 × 100 m freestyle relay .

After the Olympics , Windle enrolled at Indiana University , where he trained under Doc Counsilman . While in the United States , Windle converted to sprint swimming . He competed in the 1966 British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Kingston , Jamaica , winning the 440 yd freestyle , 4 × 110 yd and 4 × 220 yd freestyle relays , all in world @-@ record times . He competed in his second Olympics in Mexico City in 1968 , racing the 100 m and 200 m freestyle and the corresponding relays , having completed his transition to sprinting . He won a bronze and silver in the respective relays and retired after the games . In retirement , he worked for Allis @-@ Chalmers in the United States , before being transferred to their Australian division .

= = Early years = =

Born in Sydney on 7 November 1944 , Windle grew up in the eastern Sydney suburb of Waverley . Windle and his sister Norma learnt to swim at nearby Bronte Beach . His family later relocated to Bexley North , and he swam for his school team at Marist College Kogarah . Windle was coached by Frank Guthrie at the Enfield pool from the age of 12 . After a fortnight of training , he entered the district age group championships and won a place in the top three . From then on , he began training three or four times a week , and his father drove him to Enfield for morning training . By the age of 15 , he was training every day .

A turning point for Windle was the 1960 Australian Championships ; he came second in the 1650 yd freestyle behind John Konrads and was selected for the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome . He dropped out of high school to attend a three @-@ month training camp in Queensland with the Olympic swimming team . Windle did not swim in Rome ; team officials merely wanted him to learn from the routine and atmosphere of Olympic swimming . On his return to Australia , he switched to the tutelage of Don Talbot , who also coached Konrads .

Talbot nicknamed Windle " the greyhound " because of his thin and angular build . As a result of Windle 's small build , he took between 45 and 47 strokes to complete a lap , but fellow distance swimmer Murray Rose needed only 35 to 37 strokes . Talbot said that Windle was the most thinly built elite swimmer that he had trained , and had great trouble in trying to increase Windle 's frame . Talbot motivated Windle and instilled him with a greater level of self belief . For his part , Windle responded by increasing his workload , and was regarded as Talbot 's most diligent student . Windle

trained with a determination that often saw him swim through others who were in his training lane . These collisions led to complaints by recreational swimmers that Windle was too aggressive . He often did twice as much pre @-@ season training as the other swimmers in Talbot 's squad . According to Talbot , Windle 's weakness was that he was only capable of swimming in two ways , flat out or very slowly . Windle had trouble in pacing himself to conserve energy for later events . Talbot lamented to " never [being] astute enough to realise that he [Windle] didn 't have the subtleties of pace that would have added to his armament as a swimmer " .

= = First national title and international medals = =

At the 1961 Australian Championships , Windle won the 1500 m in a time of 17 min 37 @.@ 7 s to claim his first Australian title at the age of 16 . However , his victory was overshadowed when his bathers partly fell off during the race . In the following year , Windle showed his versatility by winning the 220 yd , 440 yd and 1650 yd freestyle events , in times of 2 min 2 @.@ 9 s , 4 min 25 @.@ 0 s and 17 min 53 @.@ 3 s respectively . He also anchored the New South Wales team to victory in the 4 × 220 yd freestyle relay . Selected for the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Perth , he marked his international debut with silver and bronze in the 1650 yd and 440 yd freestyle respectively . Murray Rose , who had returned from competition in the United States college system , won both events . Rose won the 1650 yd event , finishing in 17 min 18 @.@ 1 s , with Windle 26 @.@ 4 s in arrears . In the 440 yd event , Rose finished in a time of 4 min 20 @.@ 0 s , 3 @.@ 1 s ahead of the third @-@ placed Windle . Windle also won gold in the 4 × 220 yd freestyle relay , along with Rose , Allan Wood and Anthony Strahan , setting a world record in the process .

With Rose absent in the United States , Windle won the 220 yd , 440 yd , 880 yd and 1650 yd freestyle at the 1963 Australian Championships , in times of 2 min 2 @.@ 8 s , 4 min 23 @.@ 0 s , 9 min 10 @.@ 5 s and 17 min 59 @.@ 6 s respectively . His quest to sweep all of the freestyle events failed when David Dickson defeated him in a touch finish in the 110 yd race . The pair were neck and neck but Dickson judged the finishing touch on the wall better . Windle collected two more wins as part of the New South Wales team in the 4 × 220 yd and the 4 × 110 yd freestyle relays , anchoring both quartets .

Windle set world records in the 200 m and 220 yd freestyle in 1963 , posting times of 2 min 0 @.@ 3 s and 2 min 1 @.@ 1 s respectively . He won three individual titles at the 1964 Australian Championships , the 200 m , 400 m and 1500 m freestyle in times of 2 min 0 @.@ 0 s , 4 min 17 @.@ 6 s and 17 min 9 @.@ 4 s respectively . As it was an Olympic year , the competition was held over metric distances , in conformance with Olympic standards . Windle was a member of all three New South Wales relay teams as they swept the relay events , winning the 400 m and 800 m freestyle and 400 m medley relays .

= = Olympic gold = =

Windle 's performances qualified him for the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo , where he was slated to swim four events : the 400 m and 1500 m freestyle and the 4 × 100 m and 4 × 200 m freestyle relays . Windle 's first event was the 4 × 100 m freestyle relay , where he combined with Dickson , Peter Doak , and John Ryan to win Australia 's heat in a time of 3 min 40 @.@ 6 s , which lagged behind the United States ' winning heat time by 1 @.@ 8 s . Windle anchored the team as Australia came from second at the halfway point to win their heat . The Australians were the second fastest qualifier for the finals . However , the United States improved their time by a further 5 @.@ 6 s in the final , but Australia could only improve their time to 3 min 39 @.@ 1 s , leaving them third behind the Americans and Germans . Australia were in second place for the first two legs , until Germany moved into the silver medal position at the last change by 0 @.@ 1 s . A distance swimmer , Windle could not keep up with his German anchorman counterpart , and Australia fell 1 @.@ 9 s behind the silver medalists by the end of the race .

In the 400 m freestyle heats , Windle and Talbot made a misjudgement ; in an attempt to conserve his energy for the final they decided that Windle should not go flat out , and Windle was four

seconds slower than he was at the Australian Championships . Windle was one of the top seeds for the race , and Talbot advised him to swim hard in the first half of the race before slowing down . However , he swam too slowly and missed the final completely . Although he won his heat by seven seconds in a time of 4 min 21 @. @ 6 s , he was the ninth fastest overall , so he missed the final by one position with a time deficit of 0 @. @ 5 s . The slowest qualifier was Tsuyoshi Yamanaka , who had been prevented from withdrawing from the race by his coaches . On the other hand , the two other Australian representatives who he defeated at the national championships did make the final , including Wood , who went on to win bronze . Talbot said that the tactical error was mostly his responsibility and that he learnt a lot from it .

In the 1500 m , Talbot decided that Windle would attack from the outset and attempt to hang on in the latter stages of the race . They also worked on Windle 's technique , curing his habit of dropping his elbow to a lower position when he was tired . Windle broke the Olympic record in the heats with a time of 17 min 15 @. @ 9 s to qualify fastest for the final by more than six seconds . In the final , Windle repeated the strategy of sprinting from the start , leading throughout to lower his own Olympic record to 17 min 1 @. @ 7 s and holding off American John Nelson by 1 @. @ 3 s . Windle 's tactics disrupted the raceplan of the Americans ; Nelson and world record holder Roy Saari had planned to pace each other throughout the race , but ended up reacting to Windle instead of swimming their own race . As a result , Saari finished in seventh place , far outside his global standard .

Windle later combined with Wood , Ryan and Dickson in the 4 × 200 m freestyle relay final . Having rested their two individual medalists ? Wood and Windle ? in the heats , Australia struggled to fourth place and were the slowest qualifier for the final . In the decider , Australia were fourth when Windle dived in for the anchor leg , 3 @. @ 7 s behind the third @-@ placed Japan . Windle posted a time of 1 min 58 @. @ 7 s , the sixth fastest split in the race and the fastest Australian leg by 3 @. @ 0 s . Although he made up 1 @. @ 8 s on the Japanese anchor swimmer , it was not enough and Australia finished fourth , 1 @. @ 9 s out of the medals .

= = US college career = =

After the Olympics , Windle enrolled at Indiana University ? whose Indiana Hoosiers swimming team was coached by Doc Counsilman ? on an athletic scholarship . He did so after getting advice from Australian team @-@ mate , Olympic gold medallist and Indiana student Kevin Berry . He studied business while competing for the university , where he switched his focus to shorter sprint distances . Windle did not enjoy as much success at short @-@ course swimming in the United States as he did in long @-@ course swimming . He cited the lack of enjoyment for switching to shorter distances , quipping " Why swim 30 laps for a gold , when you can get one for swimming two laps ? " However , Windle enjoyed his time in the United States , approving of the additional emphasis on relays and team spirit and the social life that it entailed . Windle also enjoyed learning from Counsilman , who was regarded as an expert in mechanics , resulting in an improvement in his swimming technique .

Windle 's performances in the United States for Indiana earned him selection for the 1966 Commonwealth Games in Kingston , Jamaica . He won the 440 yd freestyle in a world record time of 4 min 15 @. @ 0 s , but with his focus now on the shorter distances , only managed fourth in the 1650 yd freestyle with a time of 17 min 49 @. @ 2 s , 4 % slower than his personal best for the distance . He won golds in the 4 × 110 yd freestyle relay with Ryan , Dickson and Michael Wenden and the 4 × 220 yd freestyle with Wenden , Dickson and Peter Reynolds . The times of 3 min 35 @. @ 6 s and 7 min 59 @. @ 5 s , respectively , were world records .

= = International farewell = =

In 1967 , Windle retired , but made a comeback to compete in the shorter distances after being persuaded by Talbot . In 1968 , Windle anchored Indiana 's 880 yd freestyle relay to victory at the National Collegiate Athletic Association Men 's Swimming and Diving Championships , sealing what

would be the first of six consecutive men 's team titles for the university . He then competed in the Australian Championships for the first time in four years . Although he did not win any individual events , he was part of New South Wales ' winning quartets in the 4 × 100 m and 4 × 200 m freestyle relays . Windle was appointed the captain of the men 's Olympic swimming team , gaining selection for the 100 m and 200 m freestyle events and the respective freestyle relays . He was not selected for the 1500 m freestyle , ending the defence of his Olympic title before the team had reached Mexico City .

In the 100 m freestyle , Windle came second in his heat in a time of 54 @. @ 8 s , making him the sixth fastest qualifier for the semifinals . He improved his time to 54 @. @ 6 s in the semifinals , but this placed him only 11th and he missed the final by 0 @. @ 5 s . In the 200 m freestyle , Windle came second in his heat behind Wenden and scraped into the final by 0 @. @ 3 s as the seventh fastest qualifier . He improved his time by 0 @. @ 1 s in the final to finish sixth in 2 min 0 @. @ 9 s . Wenden won both events . After the 200 m final , Wenden lost consciousness due to exhaustion and sank underwater . Wenden was pulled from the water and saved after Windle noticed the incident .

In the 4 × 100 m freestyle , Windle combined with Wenden , Robert Cusack and Greg Rogers to win bronze behind the United States and the Soviet Union . Australia used the same team and swimming order in both the heats and finals , with Windle doing the third leg . Australia came second in their heat behind the United States and qualified third overall , and the Soviet Union were the second fastest . It was a similar story in the final ; Australia were third at every change . Despite Wenden anchoring the Australians with the fastest split among all 32 swimmers in the race , the Australians missed the silver medal by just 0 @. @ 5 s . In the 4 × 200 m freestyle relay , Windle won a silver along with Wenden , Rogers and Graham White . The quartet won their heat and qualified fastest , while the Americans qualified second with their second @- @ choice team . However , using their full @- @ strength team in the final , the Americans won by 1 @. @ 4 s . Australia were 2 @. @ 5 s behind at the halfway point of the race , but the Americans were able to hold on , despite the gains made by Windle and Wenden in the last two legs .

Windle retired after the Games , noting that " I have swum to that point when I could hardly lift myself out of the water . I have seen John Konrads to that point also . I would always give 110 % . There is no substitute for hard and honest work " . Windle was usually regarded as the fittest and hardest @- @ working member of the Australian swimming team . In retirement , Windle stayed in the United States for a few more years , working for Allis @- @ Chalmers , an agricultural equipment corporation . He returned home after being transferred to the Australian division of the firm 's operations . Windle was inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame in 1987 and the International Swimming Hall of Fame in 1990 .