

= Peter Evans (swimmer) =

Peter Maxwell Evans (born 1 August 1961) is an Australian breaststroke swimmer of the 1980s , who won four Olympic medals , most notably a gold in the 4 × 100 m medley relay at the 1980 Moscow Olympics as part of the Quietly Confident Quartet . He also won consecutive bronze medals in the 100 m breaststroke at the 1980 and 1984 Summer Olympics .

The son of prominent Western Australian businessman and politician Max Evans , Evans had a late start to his swimming career , making his debut at the Australian championships aged 17 . Despite placing second in the 100 m breaststroke , he was not selected for Australia , and instead travelled to the United Kingdom to train under David Haller . During this period , he quickly improved his times and rose from outside the top 200 into the top 25 in the world rankings . Evans returned to Australia in 1980 and qualified for the Olympics in both the 100 m and 200 m breaststroke . A sprinter , he won the 100 m in an Australian record time and showed a preference for shorter events , which required less training mileage . Evans gained a reputation for often doing fewer training laps than his coach asked of him . Having rebuffed Australian government pressure to boycott the Moscow Olympics in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan , Evans won bronze in the 100 m breaststroke . His career peak came in the 4 × 100 m medley relay , when he outsplitted his opponents in the breaststroke leg of the relay , bringing Australia into contention for its eventual win , which remains the only time that the United States has not won the event at Olympic level .

After the Olympics , Evans moved to the United States to study business and compete for the University of Arizona . He was less successful in the short @-@ course format used at college level , which placed more reliance on efficient turns . Evans returned to Australia for the 1982 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane , winning silver in the 100 m breaststroke and gold in the medley relay . He competed in his second Olympics in Los Angeles in 1984 , winning bronze in both the 100 m breaststroke and the medley relay . Evans retired after missing selection for the 1986 Commonwealth Games and attempted to follow his father into politics . He unsuccessfully stood as the candidate for the Liberal Party of Australia in the electoral district of Perth at the 1986 state election , before pursuing a career in business .

= = Early years = =

The second of four children , Evans was born into an affluent family in Perth , Western Australia . His father Max was a chartered accountant who went on to become a politician for the Liberal Party in the state 's Upper House . Max was the president of the Western Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and a senior partner in the accounting firm founded by Sir Charles Court , then premier of Western Australia , who was credited with modernising the state and transforming its lucrative mining industry . Max was an honorary member of the Australian Chamber of Commerce . The Evans family had a sporting pedigree . Max had been a state champion athletics sprinter at youth level and won a gold , a silver and three bronze medals as part of Western Australian relay teams at the Australian Championships . Evans ' mother Barbara , a physiotherapist , was a capable swimmer and won a half @-@ blue in netball at the University of Western Australia .

Evans attended the exclusive Scotch College in Perth for his entire primary and high school years . He was initially a self @-@ taught swimmer , having observed his father in the water . He recalled that " As I didn 't like to get up early , I didn 't get swim instruction until my sixth grade at Scotch College " . Evans later trained and competed for the school swimming team in summer as well as the field hockey team . Evans enjoyed success in all four strokes at school level , but was most proficient at breaststroke and chose to specialise in it , commenting that " I 'd rather be good at one stroke than mediocre in four " . Thereafter , he was undefeated in breaststroke at school level . Evans learned the " whip kick " from Ian Dickson , brother of Olympic freestyle swimming medallist David Dickson . Evans later honed his endurance ability under Kevin Duff and his sprinting ability under Bernie Mulroy .

= = National debut = =

In November 1978 , Evans broke the Western Australian record for the 100 m breaststroke during his final year at school . He and his father decided that he should step up his swimming career , and Evans entered the 1979 Australian Championships in Perth . Despite only four weeks of solid training leading up to the meet , Evans came second to Lindsay Spencer . However , Evans was omitted from the Australian squad that toured Britain because he was an unknown swimmer . After the meet , Evans vowed to become an elite swimmer and Olympian . A week later , Evans travelled to England to train at Crystal Palace in London under David Haller , coach of future Olympic breaststroke gold medallist Duncan Goodhew . Evans did so feeling that there was insufficient coaching support for breaststrokers in Australia . In three months of training in London , Evans had risen up the breaststroke rankings from outside the top 200 into the top 25 . He returned to Australia and won selection in the national team for the FINA (Fédération Internationale de Natation) World Cup in Japan , before returning to London for more training .

Evans returned to Australia in 1980 to compete at the Australian Championships , which doubled as the Olympic trials . His sojourn in the United Kingdom meant that he was a virtual unknown in his home country . He set a national record in winning the 100 m breaststroke in a time of 1 m 4 @. @ 80 s and also qualified for his less preferred 200 m event . During the Olympic training camp in Brisbane , the Australian coaches tried to get Evans to cover more mileage at training . Evans ' teammates recalled him stopping during a pool session and emphatically proclaiming that " Work is a poor substitute for talent " . In 2000 , more than a decade after his retirement , he was still using this slogan . Evans was confident in his own training methods and refused to bend to the coaches . His teammate Mark Tonelli said that Evans " knew what he was capable of and as far as he was concerned , he was capable of anything " .

= = 1980 Moscow Olympics = =

Having qualified to swim for Australia , another obstacle arose with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan , which resulted in a boycott of the Games by a large part of the Western world , led by the United States . The Australian prime minister , Malcolm Fraser , was also the patron of the Australian Olympic Committee , and significant political pressure came to bear on the athletes to boycott the Games . Evans ' relay team @-@ mate Tonelli believed that only the sportspeople would suffer from a boycott and that trade relations would continue unabated . He took a leadership role among the athletes to fight for their right to compete and publicise their cause among the Australian public . Evans was fully supportive of Tonelli 's campaign , reflecting that " We were political tools , and the only ones to suffer would be us . " He rhetorically asked : " Do you really think that if we didn 't go someone would come up to us after the Games and pat us on the back for not going ? " .

Having arrived in Moscow , Evans ' first event was the 100 m breaststroke , which the Soviets were favoured to win . Evans ' former flat @-@ mate and training partner Goodhew was another of the favourites . Evans placed equal first in his heat and advanced to the final as the fourth @-@ fastest qualifier , along with Goodhew , two Soviets and fellow Australian Spencer . In a hard @-@ fought final , Goodhew won the gold medal , while Evans narrowly missed out on silver , finishing 0 @. @ 14 s behind the Soviet Union 's Arsens Miskarovs to claim bronze in a time of 1 m 3 @. @ 96 s . Evans was just 0 @. @ 04 s ahead of Aleksandr Fyodorovsky , another swimmer from the host nation . Reflecting on the race , Evans felt that his lack of experience compared with Goodhew was a factor in his loss . Evans felt that Goodhew had " psyched [him] out " . Evans was less successful in the 200 m ? not his preferred distance . He came fourth in his heat in a time of 2 m 26 @. @ 62 s , which saw him eliminated with the 12th @-@ fastest time , some three seconds slower than what was needed to make the final .

= = = Relay victory = = =

The 4 × 100 m medley relay was the focal point of Evans ' Moscow campaign . The event had always been won by the United States since its inception at Olympic level in 1960 , and their boycott

had opened up the field in the event . In the five times the event had been contested , Australia 's best result was a silver in the inaugural race . A bronze in 1964 was the only other medal success , and the 1976 edition of the medley relay had seen Australia eliminated in the heats . This time , Australia was regarded as a medal chance , but were not seen as the main threats ? Sweden , Great Britain and the Soviet Union were the most favoured teams to win . The hosts ' team included the silver medallists in the 100 m backstroke and breaststroke , and their butterflyer had come fifth . Later , their freestyler would place fourth . The British had Goodhew , the breaststroke gold medallist , while Sweden 's butterflyer and backstroker had won their respective events and their freestyle swimmer would come second in the 100 m . On paper , Australia 's team paled in comparison . Neil Brooks , the freestyler , would come 14th overall after an asthma attack , and Evans was the only individual medallist in the corresponding individual event . Mark Kerry had been eliminated in the backstroke semifinals , while Tonelli was swimming as a makeshift butterflyer . Adding to the pressure was the fact that Australia had won no gold medals at the 1976 Olympics in any sport , and were yet to win one in Moscow , so the public were still awaiting their first victory since Munich in 1972 . Coming into the Olympics , Australia were ranked seventh out of the 13 competing countries .

Australia 's prospects improved after the morning heats in which Sweden was disqualified . Evans took the opportunity to attempt to regain the psychological ascendancy from Goodhew , confronting him privately and stating that " we will win it " . Evans felt that his posturing had shaken Goodhew . Tonelli , the eldest swimmer in the quartet at the age of 23 , convened the team as its de facto leader . He asked his team @-@ mates to commit to swimming their legs in a certain time ; Kerry vowed to swim the backstroke in 57 s , Evans the breaststroke in 63 s flat , Tonelli the butterfly in 54 s and Brooks promised to anchor the team in 49 @.@ 8 s , even though he had never gone faster than 51 s . Tonelli named the foursome as the Quietly Confident Quartet , and they exhibited a quiet confidence as they lined up for the race .

Kerry led off in a faster time than he had clocked in the individual event , but it was still two seconds slower than his personal best time of 57 @.@ 87 s , leaving Australia in fourth place at the end of the first leg . Evans then swam a personal best of 63 @.@ 01 s to put Australia in second place , almost level with the host nation at the halfway mark . Evans had out @-@ split Goodhew by 0 @.@ 8 s and Miskarov by 0 @.@ 5 s . Tonelli then swam his leg in 54 @.@ 94 s , almost two seconds faster than he had ever done before . Tonelli began to lose ground in the last 50 m and was a bodylength behind until a late surge brought him to within a metre of the lead by the end of his leg . Brooks then performed a powerful , well @-@ timed dive and surfaced almost even with his Soviet counterpart . He had drawn level by the halfway mark and made a superior turn to take the lead . The Soviet freestyler pulled level at the 25 m mark before Brooks again sprinted away to seal an Australian victory by 0 @.@ 22 s . Brooks had finished his leg in 49 @.@ 86 s as he had vowed to his teammates . The time of 3 m 45 @.@ 70 s sealed Australia 's first @-@ ever win in a medley relay at the Olympics , for men or women . The team then made a celebratory dive into the pool and were interviewed at the poolside . Evans said that the relay " was unbelievable , but it was all so logical . I was so deliriously happy that I couldn 't stop talking . "

Upon returning to Australia , Evans and Brooks were raucously received in their hometown of Perth . They were denied a civic reception by the Lord Mayor of the City of Perth , who supported an Olympic boycott over Afghanistan , but the Lord Mayor of Fremantle instead hosted a reception . Evans received congratulations from Prime Minister Fraser . In 2000 , Evans quipped that " We 're the Vietnam vets of the Olympic movement " . In the same year , Evans and the other members of the quartet were each awarded the Australian Sports Medal for their victory in Moscow .

= = US college career = =

A few weeks before the Olympics , Evans had signed a deal with the University of Arizona and he went there to study and swim after the Olympics . Evans was to spend five years in Arizona studying for a BA in business . He regarded his American experience as a crucial component of his development : " I got a good education , but above all I learned about myself " . The American

laissez faire attitude ? which revolved around the individual 's self @-@ determination ? sat well with Evans ' outlook on life . He often clashed with Arizona swimming coach Dick Jochums , who was regarded as a hard taskmaster . The pair clashed over the training regime ; Jochums insisted that Evans increase his mileage , something that the student strongly resisted . Evans was an All @-@ American for four years , but he struggled in the short @-@ course pools used in the college system . Short @-@ course pools ? which are only half the length ? place more emphasis on a swimmer 's turning ability , which was the Australian 's weakness . Despite his ranking as third in the world at the Olympics , which are swum in long @-@ course pools , Evans was ranked only fifth in the college system .

The Australian Swimming Union (ASU) did not recognise times that had been recorded in short @-@ course pools in the United States , so Evans was forced to return for the Australian Championships to qualify for the 1982 Commonwealth Games held in Brisbane . Despite winning neither of the breaststroke events , Evans successfully earned selection and lined up at the Commonwealth Games in the 100 m and 200 m breaststroke and the 4 x 100 m medley relay . In his favoured 100 m event , Evans won bronze , having been led home by Adrian Moorhouse of England and Canada 's Victor Davis . In the 200 m event , Evans came fourth , almost four seconds behind the victorious Davis . He then combined with David Orbell , Jon Sieben and Brooks to win the medley relay in a Commonwealth Games record time . Canada reached the wall far ahead of Australia , but were disqualified for a premature changeover .

= = International farewell = =

After the games , Evans returned to the United States to continue his studies and collegiate swimming career . Before the 1984 Olympics , Evans travelled to Hong Kong to train with Haller , who was coaching the British colony 's swimming team . Evans revitalised himself under his favourite coach and returned to his old style of sprinting . However , he twisted his ankle later in Perth and missed some training time . He won the Australian 100 m breaststroke championship to qualify for the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles , and returned to Arizona to continue training . His Olympic campaign was placed in jeopardy when the ASU threatened to remove Evans from the team for skipping their training camp in Australia . The threat was withdrawn after Evans ' father confronted the ASU and pointed out that his son was training , although in a different location . Before the Games , Evans joined the Australians for their final training camp at Stanford University in California . Evans arrived in Los Angeles with the same program as in Moscow ; he entered both breaststroke events and the medley relay . Evans started brightly to win his heat of the 100 m breaststroke in an Olympic record time of 1 m 2 @. @ 87 s . His new mark did not last long ? John Moffet broke it in a later heat to relegate Evans to the second @-@ fastest qualifying time .

Nevertheless , their opponents were able to lift and the final saw Steve Lundquist of the United States set a new world record of 1 m 1 @. @ 65 s ; Evans took bronze , 0 @. @ 98 s behind silver medallist Davis . Evans was unable to maintain the pace that he had set in the heats , clocking a time 0 @. @ 10 s slower . In the 200 m , Evans came second in his heat but was not fast enough to make the final , swimming 1 @. @ 47 s slower than the slowest qualifier to finish 17th . The final event for Evans was the 4 x 100 m medley relay . Evans was joined by Kerry , while Glenn Buchanan and Mark Stockwell swum the butterfly and freestyle respectively . The Americans were overwhelming favourites , boasting the gold medallists in three of the respective individual events . The hosts easily won the gold by almost four seconds ; Evans and the Australians were third , relegated from the silver medal by just 0 @. @ 02 s by the Canadian team , having been in the bronze medal position at every change . Evans recorded the second @-@ fastest breaststroke split , slower than Lundquist , but quicker than the rest , including Davis .

After the Olympics , Evans returned to Arizona and resumed his studies . In 1985 , he represented Australia at the World University Games in Kobe , Japan . The following year , he attempted to qualify for the 1986 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh after only ten days training . He made the qualifying time , but was omitted . Evans later stated that he felt his admission of having only trained for ten days had lowered his standing in the eyes of the selectors . As a result of being overlooked ,

Evans retired from competitive swimming .

= = Later life = =

In early 1986 , Evans won preselection for the Liberal Party in the electoral district of Perth . He contested the seat in the state election , but lost despite a four percent swing against the Australian Labor Party . Evans then travelled around the world studying international market systems , before working in fund management and international investment . He said of his swimming career : " It 's not that serious . It 's only a race . There 's a lot more to be happy and proud for and proud of . "