

= Ian Browne ( cyclist ) =

Ian Browne , also known as " Joey " Browne ( born 22 June 1931 ) is a former Australian track cyclist who along with Tony Marchant won the 2000 m tandem event at the 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne . Unusually tall and strongly built for a cyclist , Browne had little formal training and won his first Australian title in 1953 in the 10 mile event . Browne did not team up with Marchant until early in 1956 and they promptly won the tandem event at the national championships to earn national selection . The pair were eliminated after losing their first two races but were given a reprieve when the Soviet Union pair were hospitalised in a crash and forced to withdraw . Thereafter Marchant and Browne were unbeaten and progressed to an unlikely Olympic gold . Browne 's combination with Marchant was broken after the Olympics when the latter retired . In 1958 , Browne won the 10 mile event at the national titles and went on to win the event at the 1958 British Empire and Commonwealth Games . Browne went on to compete in the 1960 and 1964 Olympics in the tandem event , both times with new partners , but both times he was eliminated in the repechage round . In 1964 , he became the oldest ever track cyclist to represent Australia at the Olympics at the age of 33 . He won the last of his national titles at the age of 37 in 1968 in the tandem event but was overlooked for Olympic selection by Australian officials . He retired and later was involved in cycling administration .

= = Early years = =

Browne was born in Melbourne to Linda and Alex Browne , the second of three brothers . His father was a printer and Browne took his elementary education at Chatham Public School , before moving on to Box Hill High School and later took his university education at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology ( RMIT ) . While he was at university , he also worked in Sunshine as a laboratory assistant at Spaldings . At the age of 20 , he graduated from RMIT and took a job at the State Electricity Commission , where he worked for over 35 years continuously since then , always riding his bicycle to work , a daily journey of around 15 km .

Browne learned to ride a bicycle at the age of four , but did not enter his first formal cycling competition until the age of 16 , when he joined the Hawthorne Amateur Cycling Club . Browne made a habit of riding to training with his ordinary bike with heavy wheels to the club , carrying the lighter racing tyres on his back and changing his tyres upon his arrival . He earned extra money to fund a bicycle upgrade by working as a newspaper boy . There was little formal coaching at the club , and the cyclists learned by individual application and by watching and copying others . Browne and his club @-@ mates raced on Saturdays and trained on Sundays .

Browne had his first success at a major competition when he won the 10 mile at his first Australian Championships in 1953 . He did not team up with Tony Marchant until the start of 1956 , just ten months before the start of the Melbourne Olympics . Marchant had risen to prominence by winning the 500 m time trial at the 1955 Australian Championships for juniors , prompting Browne to select him as his partner based on his raw speed . For a final test run before formally committing to racing together , the pair simply had a few tandem sprints around the track , with Browne sitting in the front seat . They were a contrasting pair ; Marchant was a short man of 170 cm ( 5 @. @ 6 ft ) and 65 kg ( 143 lb ) , while Browne stood at 186 cm ( 6 @. @ 10 ft ) and 86 kg ( 190 lb ) , unusually tall for a cyclist . The pair went on to win the 2000 metre ( m ) tandem event at the Australian Championships in 1956 , but going into the Melbourne Olympics , nobody , themselves included , regarded them as realistic medal chances . However , their mentor , former champion Billy Guyatt convinced them that they had the potential to make progress at international level .

Their training schedule consisted of individual training two or three times a week and two days a week of coordinated tandem training during the Olympic year . Marchant 's main tactical responsibility was to look to the outside for impending attacks while Browne patrolled the inside . Marchant devised a signal system , such as a head bump on Browne 's hip , or even a verbal shout when the opposition made a move .

= = Olympic gold = =

Ten nations were entered in the tandem competition , and in the first round , they were drawn with Germany and South Africa , who fielded their silver medallist pairing of Tom Shardelow and Ray Robinson from the 1952 Summer Olympics in Helsinki . The Australians made their move too early and led at the ringing of the bell at the start of the last lap , but they were overhauled well before the line as they faded in the final straight . Browne and Marchant were given another chance in the repechage round later in the same day . The Australians lead for three quarters of the distance , but were overhauled by their Czechoslovakian opponent in the final metres and were defeated in a photo finish . This would normally have meant that the Australians would have been eliminated , however the final repechage between the Soviet Union and the Germans resulted in a tangle , resulting in a heavy pile @-@ up . Neither teams finished the race , but the Soviets were hospitalised . The cycling officials decided that the bruised Germans would be forced to compete in a repechage sequel against the losers in the previous repechages to qualify . This allowed the United States and the Australians a reprieve .

The Australians seized their good fortune and set their fastest time to date with 11 @.@ 0 seconds ( s ) . Having been beaten twice after leading out , the Australians sat back before sweeping past the injured Germans and the Americans in the final lap . Australia were again drawn against South Africa in their quarter @-@ final , who had defeated them easily in the heats . This time they equalled the fastest team in the competition over the final 200 m , clocking 10 @.@ 8 s to progress to the final , where they faced the Italy . Giuseppe Ognà and Cesare Pinarello appeared to be in control at the start of the final lap . They had moved alongside the Australians with one and a half laps to go , but the Australians surprised them at the start of the final lap . The Italians came back to pull level at the start of the back straight , but the Australians held them off and pulled away to win by a length and a half . The Italians lodged a protest for interference but it was dismissed . The Australians finished in a time of 10 @.@ 8 s and Browne later claimed that he was convinced by the performance that they would win the gold medal .

The final took place on the third day of racing . The Australians came to the conclusion that their wheels and tyres were too heavy , so they sought to buy better cycling equipment from the defeated Germans . The Germans agreed , saying " Have ours and you will win the gold medal . " Australia were again pitted against the Czechoslovak Vaclav Machek and Ladislav Foucek . One of the reasons behind Australia 's return to form had been the return of Guyatt to a mentoring role . Guyatt had assisted them at the national championships , but they were assigned to another coach at the Olympics . Guyatt was regarded as a marketing @-@ style motivator and he attempted to give Browne and Marchant a psychological boost . Equipped with their new machines , Browne and Marchant employed a tactical trick devised by Guyatt . The Australian staff had noticed that the Czechoslovaks had always made their final burst from a certain point from the finish . During the final , Australian team manager Bill Young stood at the said point as the Australian led out . When Browne came to the point , he pulled upwards and pre @-@ emptively blocked the expected Czechoslovakian attack . This helped to stifle the attack and Australia went on to win the gold medal .

= = Later career = =

Following the Olympics , Marchant retired , and Browne went on to win the individual 10 mile race at the 1958 Australian Championships . Browne went to the 1958 British Empire and Commonwealth Games at Cardiff in Wales . He was unplaced in the sprint , but won the 10 mile race to collect a gold medal . Browne had intended to retire after returning from Cardiff , but the lure of a second Olympics proved too much . In 1960 , he won the 2000 m tandem with Geoff Smith at the Australian Championships and was selected for the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome . There was to be no repeat of the triumph in Melbourne , as the pair were eliminated in the second repechage . Since no other Australian older than 28 had ever represented the nation in cycling , Browne was the oldest ever male cyclist to represent Australia at the Olympics . Browne continued

to the 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Perth , Western Australia , but was unable to win a gold in front of his home crowd , finishing with a bronze in the sprint . In 1964 , Browne again won the tandem event at the Australian Championships , combining with his new partner Daryl Perkins . The pair then went to the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo , where Browne beat his own mark of being the oldest cyclist to represent Australia at the Olympics , at the age of 33 . This time , the Australians were eliminated in the quarter @-@ final . Browne continued to compete at national level , successfully defending the tandem title in 1965 , this time with a new partner Gordon Johnson . He won his fifth and final tandem and his last Australian Championship in 1968 with Johnson , but the Australian selectors overlooked Browne , instead selecting Hilton Clarke to partner Johnson in the tandem at the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico City , ending Browne 's career .

Browne was regarded as an intelligent and meticulous athlete , who was known for a logical and somewhat introspective style in his approach to the sport . He felt that he did not have the raw speed to match the likes of Lionel Cox and Dick Ploog in vying for selection in Australia 's sprint team , and that he was not suited to long road races , instead focusing on medium length track racing . Browne typically was the front rider in tandem races , liking to be in control . He was regarded to be a cyclist who behaved in a careful and scholarly manner , and was known for coaxing higher levels of performance out of his younger partners . Browne was respected for his technical knowledge of the tandem and his success was often attributed to his vast experience .

= = After cycling = =

In his retirement , Browne continued his involvement in the sport , using his vast experience to serve the sport as an administrator . Browne served as the Vice President of the Victorian Amateur Cycling Association and he strongly advocated the use of a handicap system in racing , believing that it would improve the standard of racing and improve Australia 's success rate . At the age of 39 , he married Rhonda , a primary school teacher . They had three children , a girl and two boys .