

# Golf: Singapore Professional Golfers Association co-founder Alan Murray dies at 78



Former

Australian professional Alan Murray died in Perth on May 24, 2019, after battling skin cancer. PHOTO: ST FILE

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SINGAPORE - Larger than life, a "hell of a golfer", and someone with a heart of gold, is how family and friends will remember former Australian professional Alan Murray.

The 78-year-old, who co-founded the Singapore Professional Golfers Association (SPGA) in 1973, died in Perth on Friday (May 24) after battling skin cancer.

He leaves behind a son, two daughters, five grandchildren and two great-grandchild.

A former French Open and Australian PGA Championship winner, Murray had an illustrious playing career with over 60 victories around the world, including the three Rolex Masters Singapore in 1973, 1975 and 1978.

He was the 1961 Australian PGA Order of Merit winner, and was honoured with life membership of the PGA of Australia in 2005. In his only major championship, he tied for 19th in the 1964 British Open.

In 1972, Murray relocated to Singapore, where he became the head professional at the Singapore Island Country Club.

He would later go on to become president and life member of the SPGA, and set up Champions Golf Academy in Bukit Timah. After his playing career, he went on to become a renowned coach, who guided the national teams of Singapore and Malaysia, as well as New Zealand's junior team.

SPGA president M. Murugiah said on Saturday (May 25): "Alan was a very likeable person and someone who helped Singapore golf a lot. Many golfers, especially the senior golfers and local pros before my time, benefited greatly from his support.

"He was a big supporter of the SPGA and although he was ill, he made time and even attended our AGM (annual general meeting) last year. He was a wonderful guy and we will miss him a lot."

Former national golfer and Putra Cup winner Phua Thin Kiay, a fellow co-founder of the SPGA, added: "I was just 14 when I first saw him play and remembered him as a hell of a golfer.

"More than that, he is a good boss and very nice person whom I had the honour and pleasure of becoming friends with.

"He was so generous as he helped many caddies turn pro by giving them free balls and coaching tips. Whenever we struggled to find funds for local tournaments, he would also make significant donations."

Murray's funeral will be held in Perth on Thursday.

His son Matthew said: "I hope my father will be remembered as someone who coached both beginners and pros, and someone who helped bring up the standard of local pro players and coaches in Singapore.

"Other than golf, he enjoyed horse-racing, red wine, Guinness, and smoking. He had a full life."