

DATUK DR LIM TEONG WAH (1932-2016)

Datuk Dr Lim Teong Wah was a founding member of the Malaysian Contract Bridge Association, attended its inception meeting way back in 1961. He served as our Chairman since 1986 and has seen through its silver and golden jubilee anniversaries, the latter in 2011 celebrated by the hosting of the 48th Asia Pacific Bridge Federation Championships in Kuala Lumpur, for which he also served as the Organising Committee Chairman. He was also Organising Committee Chairman on several occasions when MCBA hosted the Asean Bridge Club Championships (now South East Asia Bridge Federation Championships). During his tenure as Chairman, the Malaysian Contract Bridge Association achieved associate membership of the Olympic Council of Malaysia, and became a recognised National Sports Association.

Datuk Dr Lim represented Malaysia in the Asia Pacific Championships (previously the Far East Championships and later Pacific Asia Championships) an incredible 25 times; firstly in 1961 when Malaysia sent its first ever bridge team to an international event, and up to last year in Bangkok. This is surely a national if not international record, to have represented one's country in a sporting event over a span of 55 years. He has also represented Malaysia in four World Bridge Team Olympiads (now called World Bridge Games) and all four Commonwealth Nations Bridge Championships from 2002 to 2014, one of only four players in the British Commonwealth to have done so. In 2011, at the age of 79, he was probably the oldest athlete to have participated in the SEA Games, when bridge was held for the first time. The esteem with which he is held in the regional bridge community is reflected by the numerous messages of support received, not just from Asean, but also Hongkong, India, Pakistan and the UK, extending condolences to his bereaved family and paying tribute to his dynamism, passion and long felt presence in the game. To quote from just two of them, Esther Sophopanich, President of Asia Pacific Bridge Federation "It is with great sadness to learn of the passing of our dear friend Dr Lim. He has been such a permanent fixture in all our tournaments in the Asia Pacific and a passionate supporter of the development of bridge in our region". And from Rona Gianarrigo, President of the World Bridge Federation "Dr Lim was a

great personality who honoured his country, above all a great gentleman who contributed by his example in underlining the value of fair play, honesty, distinction, tolerance without any discrimination. We will always remember him with affection”

On the local scene, Datuk Dr Lim’s achievements are unsurpassed; Malaysia’s top master-point ranked player for several years; more national titles than any other Malaysian player including a unique double of being National Teams and National Pairs Champion last year.

He always encouraged new and especially young players to take up the game. In 2008, he voluntarily took up the position as Non Playing Captain to take the first and so far only Malaysian Youth team to the World Mind Sports Games to give them the experience.

We offer our condolences to his bereaved family and share their loss. The best way of keeping his legacy is to ensure bridge continue to thrive in Malaysia.

If life may be thought of as a series of bridge hands, over his long and fulfilling life, Teong Wah would have played hundreds of thousands of hands. We are amongst those honoured and privileged to have shared many of those hands with him.