Doyle Preston Royal

January 29, 1919 ~ September 28, 2020

Doyle Royal, a championship-winning University of Maryland soccer and tennis coach and World War II Purple Heart recipient, died at age 101 in South Jordan, Utah, on September 28. The longtime Bethesda, Md., resident was a competitive tennis player for many decades, winning titles into his 90s.

Doyle Preston Royall (later changed to Royal) was born in 1919 in Washington, D.C. In 1939, he was an accomplished junior tennis player when he was recruited to play soccer and tennis at University of Maryland.

Royal enlisted in the military in 1943, where he rose to second lieutenant in the U.S. Army's 90th Infantry Division. In France prior to the Battle of the Bulge, Royal earned the Silver Star and a Purple Heart for single-handedly destroying a German Panzer tank, when he was wounded. He also earned a Combat Badge. He retired from the Army Reserve at the rank of lieutenant colonel.

After the war, Royal returned to University of Maryland, where he was head coach for the soccer team from 1946-1973 and tennis team from 1954-1980. As Maryland's first men's soccer coach, Royal holds the school record for highest lifetime winning percentage for soccer (.771), compiling a 217-58-18 record, and .866 Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) winning percentage. In 1968, he led the soccer team to the national championship, tied with Michigan State. He also won three Southern Conference championships.

As a tennis coach, Royal led the Terrapins to 17 ACC championships over a 27-year period (1954-1980), including every year from 1953 to 1968, with a record of 296-114-1. He was inducted into the University of Maryland Athletic Hall of Fame in 1988.

He considered his players part of his family. He also was assistant dean of men at the university for 35 years.

Royal never stopped playing tennis and was winning masters tennis championships into his ninth decade. He won a bronze medal at the World Olympic Senior Singles tournament in his mid-sixties. He won the 1999 U.S. Tennis Association's (USTA) Mid-Atlantic Men's 80's Singles title on clay and the USTA Maryland Outdoor 80+ and 85+ singles championships in 2001 and 2006, respectively.

From 1946 on, Royal was a fixture on the courts at Bethesda's Edgemoor Club. In 2019, at age 100, he was honored at Edgemoor by former players, students, friends and family for his lifetime achievements. University of Maryland's current soccer coach, three-time national champion Sasho Cirovski, presented Royal with a championship ring for leading Maryland to the national co-championship 51 years earlier.

Royal, whose mantra was, "Your health is your wealth," never stopped coaching, encouraging fitness in players, family and friends – and in the last months of his life, assisted living staff.

Doyle Royal was preceded in death by his wife, Loraine Bishop Royal and his son, Doyle "Derry" Royal, Jr., his parents Robert and Margaret Ellis Royall, brother Robert Royal and sister Norma Royal Cannon.

He is survived by his daughter Lisa (Greg) Butterfield and granddaughter Alexandra Butterfield, as well as cousins, nieces and nephews.

For more information, please contact Larkin Mortuary.