

John Bertrand AM

John Bertrand would have you believe that his main claim to fame is that he is a proud Australian. To his fellow Australians he is much more.

He is the Australian who skippered the winged keel 'Australia 2' to victory over Dennis Connor's 'Liberty' to win the 1983 America's Cup, breaking 132 years of American domination and, in the process, breaking the longest-running record in the history of modern sport. After being 3:1 down in the best of seven races, and considered by some as the 'Race of the Century', on September 27, 1983, off Newport, Rhode Island, this final assault on the 'Everest of sport' stopped the nation like never before. It is arguably the greatest upset in modern Australian sporting history.

Ask any Australian where he or she was that day, and they will remember.

The 'Australia 2' team victory was voted by the Confederation of Australian Sport as the greatest team performance in 200 years of Australian sport.

A world champion and Olympic medallist, Bertrand represented Australia in five America's Cups, 1970, 1974, 1980, 1983 and 1995, and two Olympic Games, Munich 1972 and Montreal 1976, winning bronze in Montreal in the Finn Class. In over 25 years of America's Cup campaigning, he was involved in all areas of activity, from skipper of 'Australia 2' to Chairman of 'OneAustralia'.

Bertrand's love of sailing continues. He actively competes at the highest level within the International Etchell class having most recently won the 2006 World Etchell Masters championships in Perth.

Bertrand is both a businessman and philanthropist. He is Chairman of The Sport Australia Hall of Fame, co-owner and Chairman of World Wide Entertainment, one of Australia's largest independent television production and distribution media companies, and Chairman of the Alannah and Madeline Foundation for children. He is a life member of the International America's Cup Hall of Fame.

His biography 'Born to Win', published in 1985, was at the time the largest-selling biography in Australian publishing history. Bertrand was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1985 for his services to sailing.

(Bio thanks to SAHOF records)

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