

FORMER COMMONWEALTH SUPERBANTAMWEIGHT AND BANTAMWEIGHT CHAMPION, THE LATE PAUL FERRERI – A TRIBUTE

I am very sorry to learn this morning of the death of our distinguished former double Commonwealth Champion, Paul Ferreri of Australia.

Paul was born in Sicily in 1948 but grew up in Australia. His professional boxing career commenced there in 1968 and he remained undefeated until 1971. He won our Commonwealth Bantamweight Championship first in 1972, holding that Title until 1977. After that loss he then won the Commonwealth Superbantamweight Championship that same year, a Title he never defended, winning the vacant Bantamweight Championship again in Denmark in 1981 against Kenyan Mike Irungu. That Title he held until 1986, losing it in his last ever contest to rising Bahamian star, Ray Minus Jr.

Paul was represented internationally by the late former CBC Director, Dennie Mancini, in whose honour an award is made each year to the Commonwealth Champion or former Champion who the board of the CBC has made a particular outstanding contribution to the sport in that year. He lost his only World Championship challenge in 1978 to the outstanding Mexican, Carlos Zarate, but defeated former and future World Champions, Venice Borkhorsor and Roland Navarette. The majority of his contests took place in Australia but he boxed with varying success all over the World. As well as Los Angeles, he boxed in Wales, Denmark, Oregon, Italy and the Phillipines.

Not only was he a double Commonwealth Champion, but he also won the Australian Bantamweight, Featherweight and Superfeatherweight Champions. His record between 1972 and 1986 was a very creditable 78 wins, 13 losses and 5 draws.

Although Paul never won a World Championship he will be remembered as one of Australia's finest boxers. I never met him myself but have a particular fondness for him and his career, which was so active when I first took over as the Commonwealth Championship's Hon Secretary in 1980, and I can recall many conversations with my friend, the late Dennie Mancini, about future Commonwealth Championship opportunities for him.

May this fine Champion rest in peace.

SIMON BLOCK
Hon Secretary
Commonwealth Boxing Council