

Neville Brabrook - Badminton, Cycling, and Table Tennis



Neville Brabrook continues to prove that age really is just a number.

While most of his contemporaries are looking forward to resting and relaxing, Brabrook, 73, is always on the move. In addition to daily walks and regular gym workouts, he also bikes three mornings a week, plays table tennis twice a week, and practices badminton four times a week. And he'll compete in all three sports at the upcoming USA Masters Games in July.

A skilled table tennis player, Brabrook discovered the sport while a youth in England and played competitively throughout the 1960s, becoming one of the top 10 players in England. After immigrating to Canada, he introduced a friend's son – Ian Kent – to the thrill of the game in 1973. Kent would later become one of the leading para-table tennis players in Canada and a coach for Canadian table tennis, even coaching Brabrook to a Canadian senior championship in Calgary in 1984.

When Brabrook moved to central Florida, he started looking for places to continue his table tennis play. But there weren't many options. After locating a club in Orlando that also had open courts for badminton, Brabrook noticed that the badminton players seemed to be having a lot of fun – and getting a great workout at the same time. So he gave it a try and was instantly hooked. So much so that he's now aiming to compete in para-badminton in the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

Brabrook's introduction to competitive cycling, however, didn't follow such a clear-cut path. Instead, it can be credited to a twist of fate. After suffering an ankle injury in a professional water skiing tournament in 2000, friends recommended Brabrook take up cycling to help speed his rehab. And just like badminton, he was hooked after the first go. This time, though, it was the speed that entranced him, prompting him to start competing in 5K and 10K time trials.

Although all three of his activities may seem quite different from each other, Brabrook says they share a common thread: they're all part of his plan to live – and thrive – until he's at least 100. And he's looking forward to competing in all three this summer at the inaugural USA Masters Games. Because while some septuagenarians may be slowing down, Neville Brabrook is just hitting his stride.