

Game of strategy

DR MARK VUCAK, QUEENSLAND PLASTIC SURGERY

Choosing your position carefully, while considering the effect it will have on future moves, is what will ultimately lead to success.

Dr Mark Vucak's lifelong passion has been to conquer the most famous of strategy games, chess. It has taken him all over the world, recently Noumea, and in April he will compete in a tournament in Macedonia. But there is one other part of Mark's life which requires a steadier hand than chess, being a surgeon.

Dr Vucak studied medicine in Perth before leaving for London to gain medical experience. He returned to Australia for further study to become a plastic surgeon and then moved to Atlanta, Georgia.

Mark's path to medicine was accelerated due to the fact that he learnt quickly. His father worked for airlines around the world, so as a child, Mark lived in a host of interesting places, from Kuwait and Sudan to London and Fiji. Despite coming from Perth, Mark learned to speak Arabic before English, and the schooling he received overseas propelled him forward two years of education. He was very young when he started university, but it didn't stop him from achieving remarkable results.

His international career has led to an advanced range of surgical options being offered in his practice. Queensland Plastic Surgery is the busiest plastic surgery practice in Australia, with an enviable reputation for quality results, and a focus on patient comfort.

Mark has three partners working alongside himself, and collectively the business has operated on more than 38,000 patients. The business receives referrals from all over Australia, and Mark is honoured when other medical professionals send their family and friends to consult with him for cosmetic and reconstructive surgery.

When he doesn't have a scalpel or chess piece in his hands, you may see Mark gripping a canoe paddle. He represented Australia in his 20's at the world championships. He was part of an adrenalin-fueled white-water canoe expedition which took him from Tibet to India, down the steep descents of Mt Everest. The journey took three weeks, and Mark slept in the local villages close to the river.

Mark's three children are 26, 23 and 21, but he is expecting his fourth bundle of joy to arrive in January, a wee girl already named Scarlett. Proof that the Queen is the most cherished in chess and in life.

