

Hall among fifteen from Canada to study Soviet Union's wrestling

By TONY PANACCI
Herald sports editor

Centennial Middle School's Jim Hall will be one of 15 coaches from across Canada to make a trip to the Soviet Union to study that country's excellent wrestling program.

Hall, whose Centennial wrestlers are among the best in Ontario, will leave for Moscow on May 27 and return here June 14.

Of the 15 coaches going six are from public and high schools in Ontario and the remaining nine are from schools across Canada. John Pickard, who coached the Canadian National Schoolboy Team along with Hall last year, and John Martin, a former coach of the GDHS wrestling team, will also make the trip.

BEST IN WORLD

"I'm really looking forward to going," Hall said. "It will give me an opportunity to work with and observe some of the best coaches and wrestlers in the world."

The tour which is being organized by the Canadian Amateur Wrestling Association, was made possible as a result of the Canada-USSR general exchange agreement signed by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin and specific documents later signed by the Institute of Comparative Physical Education of Loyola Campus, Concordia University and the USSR Sports Committee.

Hall said he was among the 15 selected to go because of his affiliation with the Canadian National Schoolboy team last year.

This will be the first time ever that Canadian coaches have been allowed to the Soviet Union to study wrestling.

Hall said that the studying for the 15 coaches while they are in Russia will be very intense.

"There are several cultural tours scheduled, but the majority of the time will be spent studying their wrestling program," Hall said. "I expect we will be working on it 12 or 13 hours a day."

Hall said that the majority of the Canadians coaches' time will be spent observing the practical side of wrestling, but that they will also get involved in some of their theory.

MORE BASIC

"I am really looking forward to talking and working with their coaches," Hall said. "They have a different approach to wrestling there...it is much more physical and their technique is more basic."

The Soviet Union has taken



Centennial Middle School physical education teacher Jim Hall will be one of 15 coaches going to the Soviet Union to study the sport of wrestling. Hall will depart for the trip on May 27.

(Herald staff photo)

the wrestling world by storm, as they have in many

other sports, in the last decade. They won the most medals in the sport at the 1976 Montreal Olympics.

In his career Hall has worked almost exclusively in free-style wrestling. He said that in this trip he will get the opportunity to also work in the Greco-Roman style and Sambo wrestling.

In Greco-Roman wrestlers are not allowed to use their legs. It is strictly attacking the torso of an opponent. Sambo is a combination of judo and wrestling. The Soviets excel in those styles as well.

The Canadian contingent will not leave Moscow while in the Soviet Union. The majority of their hours will be spent in the famous National Institute of Sport and Physical Education.

According to literature from Concordia the objective of the course is to provide the 15 Canadian participants with a comprehensive overview of the system of sports and physical

education in the Soviet Union.

As well as studying wrestling the Canadians, if they choose to, may also study physical education, and the science of volleyball. Hall said he will stick almost exclusively to wrestling.

The group will also concern itself with physical education programs for male and female students at elementary, secondary and university levels in the Soviet Union. It will also delve into philosophical, psychological and physiological areas of physical education and recreation programs in the USSR.

BIG PART

"I am very interested in studying the psychological make up of the Soviet athletes," Hall said. "I have been told it will be a big part of the course."

Hall said that the wrestling program in Russia differs very much in structure from Canada's. "In Russia they have a lot of club wrestling, whereas here wrestling is basically just a school sport."

This is the first time that

the Russians have let their wrestling program be scrutinized by foreigners. "It seems that they get to the point where they become exceptional at a sport and then they let the rest of the world see how they did it" Hall said.

The Centennial physical education teacher said he is not sure exactly how he will put the knowledge he gains from the trip to use when he returns home. He said he may apply to coach to a higher level of wrestling next year.

JUNIOR

However, Centennial and Canadian junior wrestlers will benefit from Hall's experience in Moscow in the very near future. He said that he will once again be one of the coaches of the Canadian National Schoolboys team.

Last year Hall was also the main organizer for the team and it did all its practising at Centennial School. The matches to decide who made the team were also held in Georgetown.

This year the training camp for the team will be in St. Catharines. Hall is coaching the team along with Bill Smith of Lakeport high school in St. Catharines.

Hall said that approximately 10 of his Centennial wrestlers will be trying out for the team.

Hall's wife Patty is also very involved in the organizing of wrestling and was on the staff of last year's Schoolboy team.

As previously mentioned there will also be several culture events scheduled during the Canadian contingent's stay in Moscow.

Among the highlights will be trips to see the Bolshoi Ballet, Moscow Symphony, Moscow Circus, Exhibition and Economic Achievement, the Red Square, the Kremlin, Lenin's Mausoleum, St. Basil's Cathedral, The Novo-Devichy Monastery and a trip to Zagorsk. In addition on the return trip from Moscow, there is a stop-over planned for Copenhagen, Denmark for sightseeing.

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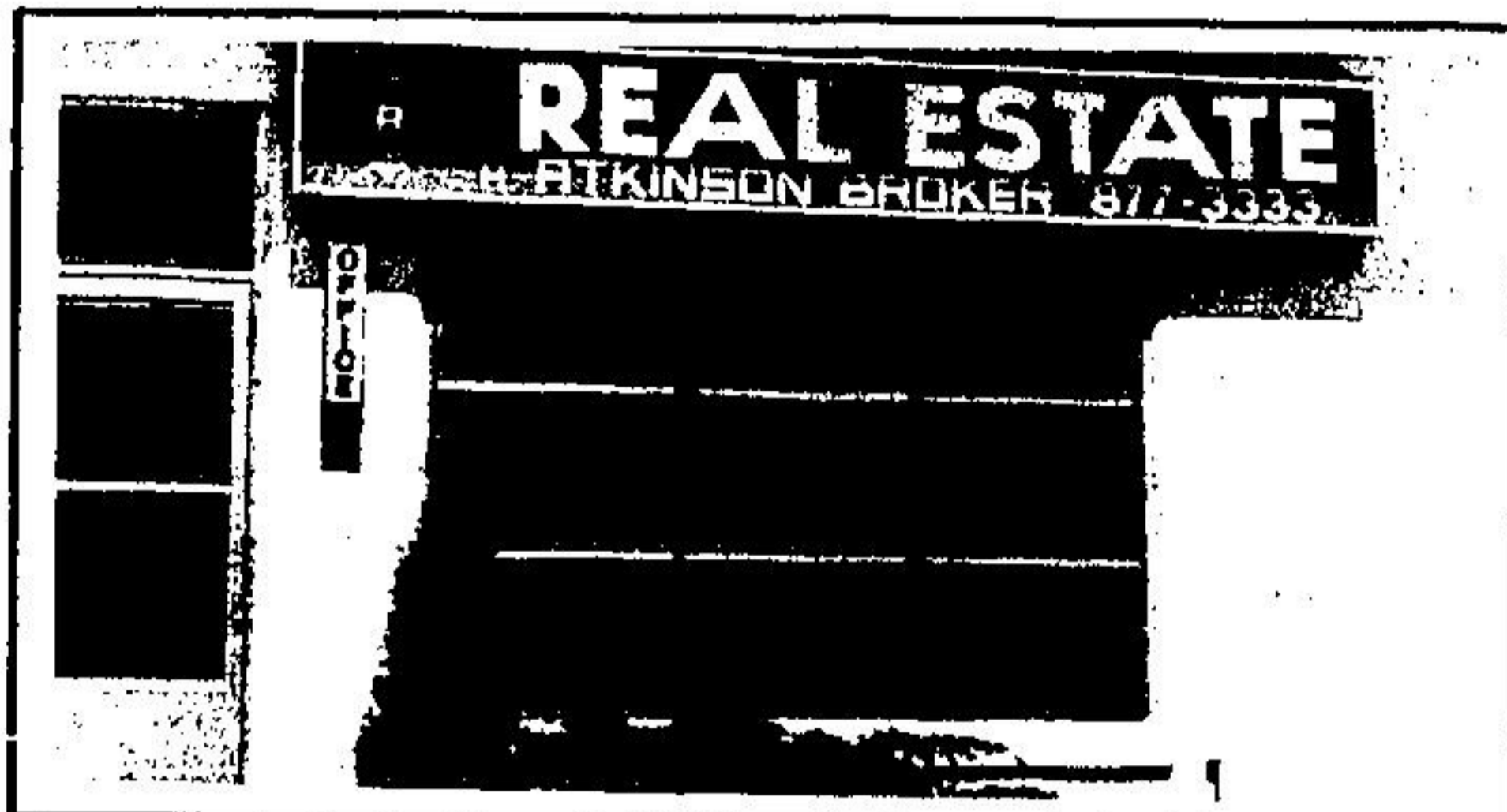


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