

"Athletes not forced"

# Jim Hall returns from Moscow

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Jim Hall recently returned to Georgetown after three weeks in Moscow, Russia where he and 83 other North Americans had the opportunity to study coaching techniques in that country.

Hall said he went into the trip with preconceptions of what life for an athlete is like in the Soviet Union, but he added that a lot of them turned out to be misconceptions.

**NOT FORCED**

"A lot of people in North America think that Soviet athletes are forced to pursue sports if they show ability in them," the Centennial Middle School Physical Education teacher said. "Actually youngsters there, as far as I could see, have the option of training in a sport or not."

The Centennial School teacher was one of 15 wrestling coaches from throughout Canada to make the trip. There were also 15 wrestling coaches from the United States. The other coaches and teachers on the jaunt were there to either study the Soviet's training techniques in volleyball or physical education. Half the people on the trip were Canadians and the other Americans.

Hall said that although youngsters are not forced to train in a sport they show promise in, most of them consider it a high honor to be asked to pursue excellence in athletics and do so.

Hall said he also went into the trip expecting the young Soviet athletes to be very

sombre and businesslike in their training.

**HAVE FUN**

"Actually, although the Soviets are completely serious during training they also seemed to be enjoying it a lot and having fun."

During the first week Hall was in Moscow the group of 84 North Americans stayed together and visited schools to observe the teaching and coaching techniques.

Hall said children in Russia all enter the educational system when they are one year old. They stay in that same school until they are seven years old. They are in school each day from 7 to 7.

"The reason they begin school so early in their lives is that there is full employment in the Soviet Union," Hall said. "However it is not a day-care centre . . . During the final years in that school students study the history of their country and also have physical education."

**NEXT PHASE**

It is during the next phase of the young Soviet athletes' life that he begins to specialize in the sport he shows promise in. From the ages seven to 17 the student attends the same school. At that school, aside from studying academic subjects, the students also can join one of the clubs if they show promise and interest in a sport.

"Their facilities in the schools are not as good as they are here," Hall said. "But in the clubs the coaching the athletes receive is excellent."

It is in the clubs that the athletes receive most of their training. The major clubs in Russia are Red Army, Locomotive, Torpedo,

Dynamo and Spartak. Large factories also have their own clubs.

"The students actually consider it a real honor to be asked to join a club and to try and achieve excellence in a sport," Hall said. "The motto for the schools is 'working in preparation for labor and defense.'"

The school day for youngsters begins at 7 and ends at 2:30. The clubs are open from 2:30 until 10 p.m.

In the sport of wrestling while an athlete is younger he trains for two hours, four nights a week. When he gets older it becomes three hours, five nights a week.

**ONE-TO-ONE**

What impressed Hall most about the clubs is the amount of individual coaching each athlete received. In gymnastics he said every athlete received one-to-one coaching.

Hall said that while the North Americans visited the schools they were encouraged to converse with the athletes and the coaches. There was an interpreter on hand at all times.

"It seemed that there they emphasize discipline much more than they do here," he said. "Here it seems that discipline depends on specific teachers. There it is part of the system the youngsters grow up in."

In the final two weeks of his stay there Hall just studied the wrestling program.

The coaches in the clubs have to have their Master of Sport certificate. "The coaching is very professional," Hall said. "There was absolutely no time wasted and the practises were very intense and although it was very intense it seemed like the kids were having a ball."

Hall said that the major difference between wrestlers here and in Russia is that there the moves are very sound.

**DON'T MISS**

"We know all the things they know about wrestling," he said. "But there their moves are very sound . . . they just don't miss."

Hall also said that the Russians have specialists in both Greco and Free-style wrestling, whereas here we just do not have the amount of people to do the same.

"Here a top free-style wrestler would also be difficult to beat in Greco. There a free-style ljt would not come close to Greco wrestler." In Greco wrestlers are not allowed to use the legs.

Most of the North Americans' time was spent at the Institute of Physical Fitness studying Soviet techniques, but there was also time for sightseeing, shopping and many cultural events.

Hall said that when he was not studying his time was his own. "We could go anywhere

we wanted to in our spare time without Soviet escorts."

**HELPFUL**

He said he found the Soviets to be very friendly and even helpful when they could be.

"It's surprising how much they know about Canada, especially hockey," he said. "They all talked about Guy Lafleur and Ken Dryden."

Hall said that Moscow is a very clean city with a fantastic subway system. He also said that there is not a house to be found in the whole city. Everybody lives in apartments.

"It is great honor in Russia to be a laborer such as a bricklayer or carpenter," Hall said. "The laborers get paid more than professionals such as teachers or coaches."

Hall said that he found the average Russian to be very jovial and friendly.

There were also many cultural events set up for the visiting North Americans. They went to the Moscow Circus, the ballet, a rock concert in which Russian bands played your basic rock and roll, and tours of the Kremlin, Olympic site, the Red Square and Lenin's Mausoleum.

The group also saw an international basketball game between the Soviet Union and Poland, a national soccer game and a city final volleyball game.

**WOULDN'T SWITCH**

Hall said he enjoyed his trip very much but that he would not trade his position with a teacher in the Soviet Union for anything in the world.

"They just haven't got the interaction between the students and teachers there," he said. "Their system is no better than ours and no worse . . . it is just different. It works there because their society is structured differently. It would not work here."

Hall also said one reason the Soviets win so many gold medals in sports is pure numbers. They have 300 million people while Canada has 25,000.

"They can have athletes specialize in just one sport while having many others to specialize in other sports."

Hall said he thinks Canadian youngsters work just as hard as they do in the Soviet Union and are just as tough.

"I don't think I will change my basic approach to coaching because of the trip," Hall said. "I will use some of the things I learned in the teaching of techniques in wrestling."

The Canadian's trip to Russia was part of a course with Concordia University. Hall will now prepare a paper on the trip to receive a credit.

## 10 local wrestlers going to tryout

At least 10 Georgetown wrestlers will be vying for spots on the National Schoolboy team when the trials are held in St. Catharines July 21 and 22.

Centennial wrestling coach Jim Hall, who will again be one of the coaches of the Schoolboy team, said 10 boys have said they are intending

to try out for the squad. There may be more to come yet.

Four wrestlers off Bob McKay's GDHS Rebel team will make the trip to St. Catharines. Mike Taylor, Ken Ward, Chris Manhire and Keith Ledger are all trying out.

Taylor, Ward and Manhire

were all on the team last year. They will be moving up in age group this year. There are two divisions; 13 and 14 year olds and 15 and 16 year olds.

Six wrestlers off Hall's wrestling team at Centennial will also be trying out. They are Mike and Bob Sweezie, Doug Gillespie, Bruce Marriott, Ian MacIver, and Pat DelGuidice. The Sweezie twins, Gillespie and Marriott all won Ontario Bantam titles this past year and MacIver and DelGuidice finished second.

Last year six wrestlers made the National Schoolboy team. The World Championships were held in New Mexico.

This year the World Championships will be held at San Diego, California on August 2, 3 and 4.

As previously mentioned the trials or eliminations for selecting the team will be at St. Catharines on July 21 and 22.

Boys who win their weight classes will then return to St. Catharines on July 25 where they will train until the thirtieth.

After the competition is completed in San Diego the boys will stay there for two extra days on a cultural exchange.

Boys trying out and making the team will be approaching local merchants for sponsorships. Last year the six local boys who made the team were very well received in asking for sponsorship.

## Ian Clark runs best race in Pan-Am trials 5,000

Ian Clark continued his excellent year by recording his best time ever in the 5,000 metres event at the Pan-Am Trials over the weekend.

Clark was running in a field of 24 runners and took fourth place with a time of 13 minutes and 58.5 seconds. Paul Williams, of Toronto, won the race in a time of 13:55.

The Georgetown runner was the only high school aged student competing in the event. The remaining 23 runners were all university students or graduates.

"I was very pleased with my time," Clark said. "I beat some runners that I never had before."

Although the track and field meet was billed as the Pan-Am Trials, winners from the events were not necessarily chosen for the team.

The team selectors chose athletes who had recorded better times in previous races.

Therefore although Williams won the race he will not be a member of Canada's Pan-Am team. Peter Butler who finished seventh in this

particular race, and Greg Duhaime, who was second, will make the trip to San Juan, Puerto Rico to represent Canada. Clark had not run the 5,000 metres even

since last summer. The time he recorded this year in the event shows the dramatic

improvement he had made. Last year he had a time of 14:35 for the event.

The Georgetown runner will next compete in the Junior Canadian Track and Field championships in Van-

couver, British Columbia. He said he is not sure whether he will run the 1,500, 3,000 or 5,000.

"If it was last year I would probably choose one of the longer races," he said. "But I've gained a lot of speed so I might run the 1,500."

## Hockey games will go

Continued from Page 29

out to many practises, will not play in the team.

"We are trying out to work out an arrangement with the OMHA were we could rotate the other four players," said

Harrison.

The hockey games will go as originally scheduled. The first two games will be played on June 30 and the final two July 6.