

Paul Berg. Bl.

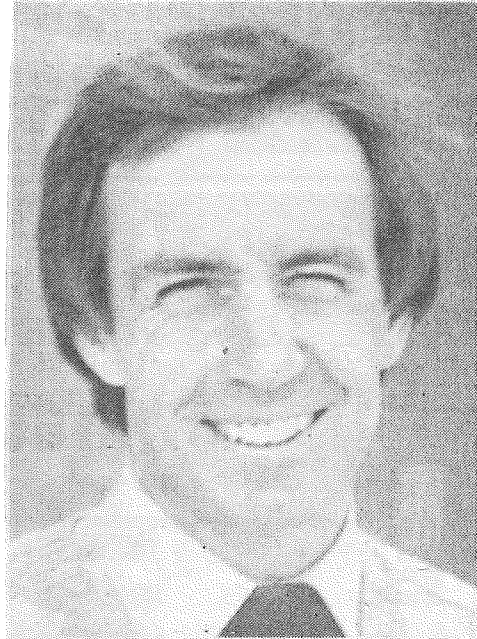
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Hickox coached Olympic medalist

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Mac Hickox coached the Canadian canoe team to a silver medal at the 1976 Olympics in Montreal.

For Mac Hickox, it ended at the 1976 Olympics.

After coaching the Canadian canoeing team to one of the strongest-ever finishes for a Western-bloc country, including one silver medal, the Mississauga resident quit coaching completely.

In fact, Hickox, Canada's Coach of the Year in 1977, had been offered a full-time coaching post but turned it down.

After more than five years of coaching local and national teams, both here and in Europe, he'd had enough.

"I just decided it was time to spend some time with my family, or to have a family for that matter," says Hickox, now head of physical education at Glenforest Secondary School in the city's east end.

Adrienne Hickox had put up with the demands of her husband's work for five years, especially after 1973, when he agreed to coach John Wood — a friend, fellow Mississaugan and, in Montreal, silver medalist in the 500-metre event.

It was a job that involved extensive travel, including several weeks each summer coaching Wood at international competitions in Europe.

what are they doing now?

And the workload picked up later, after he accepted the offer to coach the national Olympic canoe team.

Hickox himself, who raced with the Mississauga Canoe Club since 1962 and won several national championships, competed at the 1968 Olympics — not much different than less celebrated international competition, he says.

"In the Olympics, you're still competing against the same people. It's just that it's definitely the most prestigious race."

But it was his reputation as a coach, not a competitor, that got him the Olympic coaching job.

The offer came, he says in retrospect, partly because of his association with Wood and partly because of his experience as chief coach of the Mississauga club from 1970 to 1976, during which it won four national championships.

"I guess I would have been identified as an international coach. I think I was before I started coaching John (Wood)."

With coaching behind him, Hickox's contact with canoeing is virtually limited to the mixed-double contests he enters with his wife at their cottage near Bracebridge, where the family spends summers.

For athletic challenge, he looks elsewhere these days — especially to rock-climbing, a hobby for the last six years.

But most of his time is spent at Glenforest, where he began work last June after about 10 years as a teacher at Port Credit Secondary.

It was time to move on, he recalls.

"But sometimes you don't get the opportunities, or the opportunities pass you by. I was very fortunate when I got the opportunity here. And I just love it."

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HICKOX, Mac