

Coach brings 26 years experience to team

By Stephanie Heelan Cotsonas

When most people are still sleeping, islander Joyce Hooley Bartlett is already warmed up and coaching the Moses Brown squash teams at Brown University.

"One of the biggest problems we have is to find a place to play. It is still very exclusive and expensive and very much a club sport, which makes it hard to find courts to practice."

Hooley Bartlett has been in coaching for 26 years. In addition to squash, she has coached girls' soccer, lacrosse, cross-country skiing and she was a weight coach for swimming at Suffield Academy in Suffield, Conn. where she spent 18 years.

Hooley Bartlett has been at Moses Brown School since 1999. "I coached because I saw a need," she said of her decision to try her hand at coaching boys and girls squash.

Unlike schools such as St. Georges and Portsmouth Abbey, Moses Brown does not have their own courts and only gets what is available at Brown. The team spends two mornings before school and one afternoon at the Brown courts, in addition to two afternoons off court doing fitness training. When they don't have courts they will work with what they have. "We use the lines on the tennis courts to practice footwork. We run outside and run in the halls and stairwells at Moses Brown. We even had a scavenger hunt," Hooley Bartlett said.

The kids do not have very much experience when they join the team. "We get a lot of tennis players. We wish we could get more golfers because the swing is so similar." On the boys' team there are a lot of football and lacrosse players. "Even though we are a full varsity sport, it is nowhere near the intensity. The boys use it as a relaxing season," Hooley Bartlett said.

She is pleased with the progress her teams have made since she came on as coach. "We have gone from being a real C division team to a B division team in the last few years and that has been really nice," Hooley Bartlett said.

This year, three Moses Brown players will continue playing squash in college, two at George Washington and one at Bowdoin. There have been three islanders on the squash teams at Moses Brown under her watch.

Hooley Bartlett's overall philosophy on coaching is "to always



Joyce Hooley Bartlett has been a coach for the last 26 years. She has coached the Moses Brown squash team since 1999.

Photo by Stephanie Cotsonas

have fun as a team and as a coach. Play in the moment and play the best you can today," she said.

Before each match Hooley Bartlett requires her players to state one goal for themselves and one goal for the team. When they come off the court she asks them to tell her something they did well. "But they do have to think hard. Why is it easier for them to come off the court saying something they did wrong instead of what they did right?" she asked. She thinks kids focus on the negative and wants them to state the positive even if it is obvious.

Hooley Bartlett is currently in her first year as assistant coach for both squash teams as she starts the transition out of coaching. She will continue to work on the lower school sports skills, where two days a week in the fall, she works with second through fifth graders on skills like kicking. "It teaches kids skills without being

overly competitive," said Hooley Bartlett.

Hooley Bartlett continues to teach biology and chemistry at Moses Brown. She lives in Jamestown with her husband Fred and her dog Flicka. In her spare time she enjoys gardening, quilting and walking. Last fall, Hooley Bartlett completed her first Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk for team Just Wings.

Hooley Bartlett has enjoyed all her years of coaching, especially squash. She is thrilled that she helped give the girls an opportunity to play but said "as much as squash is up and coming, no one is creating squash courts or opportunity for juniors to play." Don't count Hooley Bartlett out of coaching forever. She may be back coaching squash or any other sport "where there is a need," she laughed.

For more information on the sport, see www.us-squash.org.

Plenty for families to do during vacation

Looking for something free and fun to do with the children this February vacation? Then check the Family Fun Week events organized by Rhode Island PBS, with additional financial support from Sylvan Learning.

On Monday through Friday, February 18 to 22, Rhode Island PBS and the partner venues are presenting free events at five different locations.

On Monday, Feb. 18, Clifford the Big Red Dog will make an appearance at the Warwick Mall from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Mystic Aquarium is offering four free passes on Tuesday, Feb. 19. Advance reservations are required.

An hour of free skating at the Sovereign Bank Family Skating Center will be offered on Wednesday, Feb. 20. Call in advance to register for four free passes.

On Thursday, Feb. 21, Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence will offer free admission for four people from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Curious George will make an appearance at the zoo. Advance registration is required.

The Providence Children's Museum will offer free admission on Friday, Feb. 22, from 5 to 8 p.m. Ruff Ruffman from Fetch! will be available for photos. No registration is necessary for this event.

Admission to Family Fun Week events at Mystic Aquarium, Sovereign Bank Skating Center, and Roger Williams Park Zoo require advance registration. Because of capacity limitations at these three events, and to serve the greatest number of families possible, families are asked to register for only one of these events. There are no attendance restrictions for the Warwick Mall or the Providence Children's Museum.

To register, visit www.ripbs.org or call 401-222-3636, ext. 220 and follow the prompts. Registrants will receive a confirmation email or phone call within one business day to verify registration and receive details about obtaining admission passes.

For more information about Family Fun Week, tune in to WSBE Rhode Island PBS.



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