

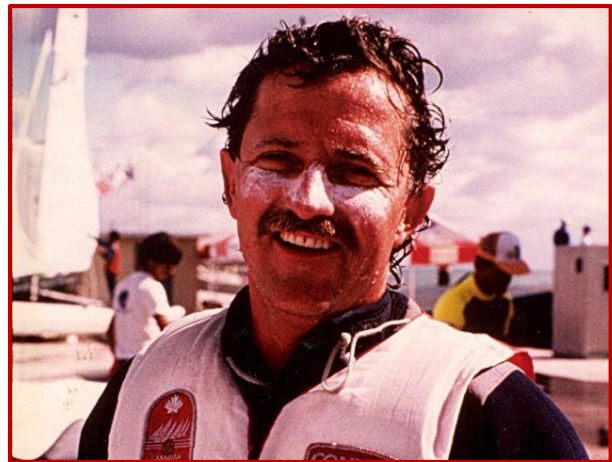
Saving Another, Losing a Medal

The Olympic Games of 1988 in Seoul, South Korea, captured the attention of people around the world because the competitions were filled with glitz – records were broken, and winners became household names.

Ben Johnson of Canada broke a record in the 100-meter race. His fame soared afterwards, until he failed a doping test that showed he took performance-enhancing drugs. The gold medal which was stripped from him was given to Carl Lewis, an American runner who had taken second place.

For Canadians, the event would have been a completely disappointing outing if it weren't for a fellow competitor named Lawrence Lemieux of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Lemieux saved his countrymen from total embarrassment.

Lemieux, an experienced yacht sailor, was well on his way to clinching the silver in the yacht competition. Competing in the Olympics had been his lifelong dream. But then something occurred that no one ever expected.



Joseph Chan of Singapore was racing close to Lemieux when he lost control of his yacht. Chan was struggling in the water. He was injured, barely staying afloat. Without a second thought, Lemieux abandoned the race and reached out for his fellow sportsman and brought him aboard his own boat.



Unfortunately, his act of bravery and sportsmanship cost Lemieux the silver medal, which had been well within his reach. But his act of bravery wasn't about to be forgotten.

At the closing ceremony of the 1988 Olympics, organizers of the games rewarded Lemieux's efforts by awarding him the Pierre de Coubertin Medal, an honor awarded to athletes who display an exceptional spirit of sportsmanship.

In an interview after the Olympics, Lemieux said, "As a sailor, your duty first is to people in distress; medals can follow afterwards." He added that he only wanted to do what was right and not to be a hero. Saving a distressed soul, he believed, is worth more than going after medals.

(more)

That is true. You and I probably will never compete on a world stage, but each of us can reach out and make a difference in the life of someone who is struggling.

And that is the opportunity we have every day as we go about our responsibilities in Life Care and Century Park.

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter