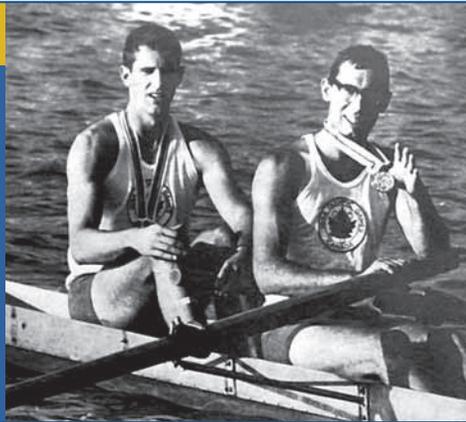


Gold medalist, rowing,
1964 Summer Olympic Games,
Tokyo, Japan



George Hungerford (left) and Roger Jackson

240 Strokes

I can still visualize that race well. A rowing race in the Olympics is about 240 strokes, give or take, over 2,000 metres. You break down your race strategy into 500 metre quadrants. My partner, now Dr. Roger Jackson, and I were not the favoured pairs team. Our even making the finals was definitely a surprise to the rowing world. But we had the fastest times in the qualifying heat, so we knew we were competitive.

George Hungerford was playing rugby when he was sidelined by a shoulder injury. To get back in shape, he turned to rowing, a sport he'd learned at Shawnigan Lake School on Vancouver Island. He soon realized that UBC was the place to row for anyone with Olympic aspirations, and that he had a chance to time the peak of his rowing abilities to coincide with an Olympic year. He never looked back.

It's a gut-wrenching sport. It requires a huge amount of concentration—there's only two people in the boat with only one oar each. You have to be in perfect synchronization with your partner. You're going full out all the time. But there are points in the 2,000-metre race where you attempt to make your move. It has to be a total team effort.

Hungerford is a senior business law partner at Fasken Martineau DuMoulin LLP, specializing in real estate, tourism and entrepreneurship. He says of rowing, "The sport gave me the ability to organize myself and focus, to work together with teammates toward a common goal, a common vision. Whether it's rowing, law practice, marriage or whether you're out in the community, invariably there's teamwork involved. That's what I really enjoy—working with a team that's committed to a common goal."

About the 900-metre mark of this race, we decided this was the point we were going to make our move and we put together probably about 30 strokes ... where I found the energy, I don't know, but we rowed flawlessly through that stretch and we

came out of that 250 metres of sheer exertion with a lead of about a length and a half. That's a fair amount of water. The favoured Dutch and Germans and the other crews had been watching each other—that's the only way we can explain it. So from the 1,200-metre mark to the finish line, our task was to maintain that lead.

Hungerford has served on the board of the Salvation Army as well as several other charitable organizations; was a member of the bid team for 2010; serves on the 2010 Games Operating Trust Society, which oversees a \$130 million legacy fund; and is Chair of the UBC Rowing Richmond Boathouse Initiative, which opened to athletes this past fall. "In the last 30 years," Hungerford says, "there hasn't been a place for UBC Rowing to call home. I think you can expect even greater things from UBC teams in the years to come." He also says there are "a lot of fine Paralympic athletes that are going to do very well at the Olympics in Beijing in '08."

We maintained our pace and it was a photo finish at the end. I don't think I could move for 15 minutes after that, but what elation ... when we saw our names flashed up on the big score board and realized what we accomplished! You don't go to the Olympics without a dream. Our dream was to do our best and to represent our country and if that took us to the podium then that would be a fantastic bonus. And it all worked out. It was a life-changing event for me.

Hungerford and Roger Jackson took home the gold—the only one for Canada at the 1964 Games—and stayed lifelong friends. Thrust into the limelight, Hungerford quickly learned how to manage success and to invest its benefits back into the family, the university and the community that had helped him achieve it.

There are times in life where I've faced seemingly insurmountable mountains, whether it be in my practice or other parts of my life, where I look back at that rowing experience and I say, I can do it.