



**Mike Brown**  
wasn't offered contract for next year

# Warriors make change on bench

■ **Prep hockey program lets go of Brown after 12 years as head coach**

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## WATERLOO

After 12 seasons, the Waterloo Warriors' board of directors has decided it is time for a change.

The Warriors will not offer veteran coach Mike Brown a contract for next season, voting instead to promote junior var-

sity coach Shawn Weinke on an interim basis until a permanent successor can be found.

"This was an extremely difficult decision to make," said Tim Robbins, Warriors president. "We did a lot of soul-searching. A lot of board members talked to parents who are in the program now and those who have left the program. The general consensus was that everybody felt it was time for a change.

"Hockey has changed a lot in the last 20 years, and we wanted to be more progressive and

more competitive and help more kids go on to the next level."

Robbins said the organization is adding a new midget team and attempting to hire a hockey director to oversee the entire Waterloo Youth Hockey Association.

"What we want people to realize is that the team's record (21-12 last season), our poor showing at the state tournament and whether kids were playing or not had little to do with this decision," said Robbins.

"Mike has been a great leader

and a good organizer for the Warriors. We are grateful for all he has done for Waterloo hockey. We just felt like it was a good time to ask him to step down."

Assistant coach Scott Murphy does not plan to return, either.

Brown expressed disappointment over the way the situation was handled, but said the positive experiences from a dozen years with the Warriors far outweigh the negative.

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## WARRIORS

**Brown saw many quality players, kids grow up**

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"There is never a good way for this kind of stuff to happen," said Brown, who learned of the decision by certified letter. "They think they are doing something good for the organization.

"I've had so many calls from so many people who have feelings about it. I just encourage them to come forward and say what they think because it is a parent-run organization. There are no guarantees they won't do this to the next person and the next person until they find

the person they are looking for."

Brown's association with hockey dates back to late 1970s when he began coaching at the youth level and then joined Murphy as co-head coaches of the United States Hockey League's Waterloo Black Hawks for two years.

After one season as an assistant coach at Columbus High, Brown took over that program and despite a 2-16 debut campaign, led the Sailors to a five-year record of 67-37-3 that included 17-1 and 18-2 championship seasons. He was twice named the Iowa High School Hockey League's coach of the year.

However, the Columbus program dissolved after the 1989-90

season. Brown returned to youth hockey for two years, then succeeded Dave Swick as the Warriors' head coach in 1992.

The Warriors struggled through the mid-1990s as numbers declined, but went 101-86-7 the past seven seasons.

"I've enjoyed it," said Brown. "There have been a lot of great people. I have a lot of great letters from people who have written to say, 'Thank you.'

"I know there are people who think we do this for the money, but the pay is really minimal. It's the personal pleasure you get watching kids grow. We put out a lot of good hockey players, but a lot of good kids, too.

"That's what makes it worthwhile."