

LIGHTNING SPIKE CUP

FINAL REPORT

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INTRODUCTION:

The following report attempts to summarize the organization and promotion of the Lightning Spike Cup Televised volleyball series.

The idea of the series was proposed late in 1982, and a decision taken by the Kanyana Executive to promote the event, following the approval of the Bendigo YMCA Volleyball Association and the Victorian Amateur Volleyball Association.

A written submission was prepared for the Bendigo Credit Union to be the major sponsor of the series. This submission was presented to the manager and marketing manager of the Bendigo Credit Union on 18th March, 1983.

The presentation included a short video tape, demonstrating how a match would appear on television, and what the sponsor could expect to receive from their involvement. The BCU expressed 'interest' in the series and advised their representatives of the club to approach TV8, to gauge their interest. It is fair to say that the BCU did not expect the approval of TV8 to be gained.

A written submission was presented to the TV8 station manager on Tuesday 3rd May. He expressed interest, and on 18th May, advised that they would be prepared to produce the series.

A video tape of the 1975 Asian Championships was provided to TV8 to assist them in planning the production of the series. A meeting was held with the Director of Production and Manager on 27th June, to determine the participants, date of recording and basic regulations for the series.

The detailed organization was then handed over to the Kanyana Club, with Sunday 16th October as the date for recording.

## PLANNING COMMITTEE:

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A committee of six was originally appointed by the club, with power to co-opt. M. Mansfield was appointed 'Series Co-ordinator', with the committee being R. Webster, T. Hogan, C. Webster, P. Colliccoat and C. Ireland. D. Smith was co-opted from the start and towards the end, C. Meurer was also co-opted.

The committee met a total of 12 times between 30th June and 13th Oct. Meetings were conducted on a Thursday night, between matches involving the committee members. On most occasions, meetings lasted for about 1 hour.

The general format of the series, and the presentation of same, was developed over the first few weeks of meetings, with the remainder devoted to minor sponsor submissions, calling of entries, distribution of details to participating associations, confirmation of arrangements and final preparation and checking.

The committee worked extremely well, with good attendances in most cases. A break in meetings occurred during the latter part of August, as the work to do depended on responses from minor sponsors and participants.

## NAME OF SERIES:

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A competition was conducted amongst club members for a suitable name. The name had to be relevant to aspects of the sport, and be relatively short.

Two members responded with a variety of suggestions, and the 'Lightning Spike Cup' was chosen by TVB as the successful suggestion.

## PARTICIPANTS:

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At the direction of TVB, representative teams from Bendigo, Ballarat, Warrnambool, Latrobe Valley, Goulburn Valley/Seymour combined and Swan Hill/Mildura combined were invited to attend.

Extensive rules and regulations were issued with invitations to teams, along with advice on the format of the series and prizes offered.

A set of modified rules were used for all matches, with the aim being to increase the rate of scoring, and result in a match of fixed duration for a half hour television show. Two 10 minute halves were played, with no time-outs or substitutions during either half. A three ball system was used and a point was scored off every service.

All associations accepted the invitation by the due date. With one exception, all abided by the regulations relating to uniform, return of information, etc., with the defaulting association incurring the specified fine.

#### STATE WIDE COVERAGE:

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TV8 made an approach to the Channel 6 network to accept the series, and after an initial cool response, and some pressure from associations in the six networks area, they agreed to take the series.

This provided coverage across the total country area of the State, with a viewing audience estimated at 600,000 - 700,000.

#### SPONSORSHIP:

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Following advice to the BCU that TV8 would go ahead with the series, they then had to look seriously at the proposal. TV8 assured us that should the BCU not go ahead, then a sponsor could be found to take their place. TV8 were determined to proceed, even without a major sponsor.

The BCU accepted the sponsorship in early September.

Submissions were sent to many organizations to purchase court side advertising signs. Fourteen submissions were originally sent, followed by a further seven as refusals came back. Of these, seven signs were sold in total, a 30% hit rate, which is about normal.

A proposal was sent to the Bendigo YMCA for use of the stadium, but was refused by the YMCA Board. Consequently, the stadium was hired at a negotiated fee, which was to the clubs benefit in the long run.

A proposal was also negotiated for the supply of balls for the series.

#### PRIZES:

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Cash prizes were offered to all teams as follows: First - \$250, Second - \$150.00, Third - \$100, Fourth - \$75 and Fifth and Sixth - \$40.

A trophy offered by TV8 was also presented to the winning team. TV8 also provided a trophy for the best player of the series, as voted by both commentators, plus a weekend for two at the Melbourne Sheraton Hotel.

A weekend for two at the Melbourne Sheraton Hotel was also provided by TV8 as a lucky door prize for spectators.

NEWSLETTERS:  
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Three newsletters were issued to competing associations providing up to date details of organization, and calling for information to be provided

Teams were encouraged to gain private sponsorship, and also to arrange for spectators to travel with their teams. Extensive information on how to go about seeking sponsorship and attracting spectators was provided. Some teams gained small sponsorships.

It appears evident that some associations lack the time, motivation and/or entrepreneurial skills, necessary to market themselves in this area.

OFFICIALS:  
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Referees for the series were provided by the Victorian Referees Commission, at the ruling rates of payment.

Lines persons were provided by selected members of the senior Kanyana womens teams.

Ball persons were provided by the U15 Kanyana womens teams.

Other officials, including scorers, scoreboard operators, timekeepers, doormen, floor wipers, etc., were provided by members of Kanyana senior mens teams.

With only minor exceptions, all of these people honoured their committment and performed creditably on the day. Practice for ball girls and referees was provided during the training sessions for teams on the Saturday before recording.

PROMOTION:  
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Mainly through the efforts of David Smith, full colour posters advertising the recording of the event were produced at no direct charge to the club. These were distributed around Bendigo schools, playing venues and BCU outlets, as well as to every competing association and some others.

Paste over strips were produced showing the channels and times of screening, after the recording.

From information provided by associations, numbered programs were produced, and sold as entry passes to spectators. These programs were also produced at no direct charge. A draw was made after the Final, to determine the winner of the lucky door prize.

In appreciation of the printing services of Bart 'n Print, a signboard was supplied by the club, which was erected above the scoreboard for the duration of the series.

Complimentary passes were printed and provided to all team members, officials and sponsors.

Two press releases were printed in the Bendigo Advertiser, and an interview was conducted on TV8 sport.

TV8 also ran several promotional ads prior to the series, with the aim of encouraging spectators. Excellent ads are run prior to each weeks match being screened.

Specially designed T shirts were printed, as part of the major sponsorship, and worn by all minor officials during the recording session. These T shirts were retained by the officials as a souvenir of the event.

#### PRODUCTION:

A practice match was conducted on the Sunday morning, prior to the first match, to provide practice for the TV8 crew.

The series recording ran very smoothly. In fact there was insufficient time for the production crew to load video tapes, etc., between matches, which resulted in matches starting up to 10 minutes later than scheduled.

The standard of production, as gauged from the first week on TV8, can only be described as excellent.

The standard of matches throughout the series varied slightly. The first two matches were of high standard, being especially selected with this in mind. The next few matches are of average standard, but the finals series are of top standard, being both close in scoring and exciting from a spectator viewpoint.

The number of spectators at the start of recording was small, but built up during the day until there was no room left at the start of the finals.

#### RESULTS:

The series was won by Bendigo, with the remaining places being filled by Latrobe Valley, Ballarat, Warrnambool, Goulburn Valley/Seymour and Swan Hill/Mildura, respectively.

The best player award was narrowly won by Gary Roberts from Colin Webster, both from the Bendigo team.

The lucky spectator award was won by Noel Irvine, from Bendigo.

CONCLUSION:  
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The series can only be described as a total success. The prime aim of the series was to provide promotion for the sport, and this has been achieved.

Early comments from non-volleyballers are very encouraging, and the response from volleyball players around the state is one of 'rapture', as was expected.

From the sponsors viewpoint, they are so thrilled with the series that they have written offering to sponsor next years series already.

Exposure for minor sponsors varies inversely in direct relation to the amount each had printed on his sign board. Clearly, next year must see the rotation of sign boards around the court after each match.

Thanks must be extended to all sponsors and TV8, for without their agreement, let alone their willing co-operation, the series would not have been possible.

Thanks are also extended to the thirty club members who assisted on the day. They all carried out their assigned duties efficiently, which contributed to the smooth recording session.

The players deserve great praise for the way they competed. The competition was fierce at all times, yet players acted in a sportsmanlike manner, and were a credit to their associations. No performance could go ahead without actors, and that was the role players took, and fulfilled admirably.

Some criticism has been levelled at the Kanyana Club for organizing this event, in preference to other Volleyball bodies. Although it is felt that these remarks are more 'jealousy' than anything else, the final result has proved that close communication and willingness to work for a cause is much more easily achieved in a club environment than in any other body. Many hundreds of manhours went into the organization and running of the event, and the club should be proud of its contribution to the development of volleyball for the benefit of every other club and association in Victoria.

To this end, I would like to thank the members of the organizing committee. Each undertook tasks as delegated, and completed these efficiently and on time. It is hoped that each member of the committee has learned something about marketing, organizing and management, and that they will use these skills in the administration of volleyball in the future.

The only thing that now remains is for associations to 'cash-in' on the promotion that Volleyball will receive via this television series. People will not come out of the 'woodwork' seeking to play volleyball - associations and clubs will have to vigorously seek them out. I sincerely hope that this occurs