

Australian Volleyball Federation Inc.



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REPORT ON TOUR OF

AUSTRALIA

BY THE

JAPAN NATIONAL WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL TEAM

APRIL 1 - APRIL 11, 1980.

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The proposal that the Japan National Women's Volleyball Team tour Australia came as a direct result of our presence at the 1979 Asia Volleyball Championships in Hong Kong and Bahrain. At these Championships, the proposal was first suggested and then gradually hammered into shape. Unfortunately, the Japanese Association was unable to confirm the visit until the first week of February, which then gave us only 7 weeks to prepare ourselves. This late notification created a number of organizational problems. Fortunately the T.V.A. agreed to alter the dates of the "Open" at late notice.

The moment we received confirmation, the states involved were advised, we also attempted to organise national sponsorship and television coverage for the tour. However, because of the late notification, both national sponsorship and television was unattainable. Although a number of good "leads" did emerge, and we were able to obtain sponsorship of the Australian Team and some minor support for the posters and programmes.

Publicity :

On a national basis, it was agreed that the A.V.F. would supply 2,000 posters and 5,000 programmes, with each state paying a small fee for the programmes (i.e. 20¢ each). Fortunately, as advertising support was adequate, no fee was charged to the states.

It was left to each individual state to organise their own local publicity and it was obvious that some states did better than others.

Accommodation :

Victoria : Queenslodge - Excellent accommodation with extremely large rooms.
Shepparton - Excellent.

Tasmania : Gateway Inn - Excellent

Adelaide : Travelodge - Excellent.

Sydney : Koala Inn - Excellent.

Meals :

In order to minimise costs, attempts were made in all states to obtain dinners or meals from local V.I.P.s e.g. Consuls, Mayors etc. In general all meals were of good quality and sufficient quantity. As part of the tour covered Easter, there were some difficulties in obtaining meals on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Fortunately, the problems were overcome.

Transport :

In general all transport arrangements were well handled, although transport to the airport was not satisfactory in all cases and obviously greater attention will need to be paid to these problems. Teams of 16-18 people have great piles of luggage, which must be taken into consideration.

Excursions :

All states organised suitable excursions, which were in the main enjoyed by the players. It must be remembered, however, that the purpose for the Japanese, was to prepare for Moscow, hence they sought training times. They came as players not as tourists.

Receptions :

All states, except Tasmania, organised receptions or dinners, which provided us with an opportunity to publicly display volleyball and also to entertain our various sponsors.

After match hospitality was good in all states.

Venue :

Victoria : Not Good. Albert Park Stadium is really not suitable for international matches or for the proper presentation of main games. Shepparton venue was very good.

Tasmania : Good, by Australian Standards, well lit, reasonable seating, plenty of room around the court.

Adelaide : Very Good, ceiling a bit low, but otherwise very good - excellent seating, good lighting and good space around court.

Sydney : Reasonable, Alexandria is a very dull stadium, although height was good, lighting good and reasonable space around the court. But not a good venue for presentations.

The venues, although in the main good, were far short of the quality used overseas. Other venues may have been available, with more time, but in general adequate venues are very difficult to obtain in Australia.

Training :

Training venues in all states, except Victoria, were adequate and reasonable training time was made available to the Japanese. In Victoria, training at Shepparton and University High was good, whilst training at Albert Park was very poor. The venue was grubby with no equipment, no lines and nails protruding out of the floor. This unfortunate situation arose as no prior arrangements by the Japanese had been made, and as Albert Park itself was not available until early evening.

Promotion/Publicity :

Build up publicity in all states was good, although in Victoria more could have been done. Fortunately as Albert Park is small, the venue was sold out. However, with better promotion a crowd of 2,000 might have been possible in a better venue in Victoria.

Adelaide had obviously achieved great success in their media campaign and were probably the most publicised state with extensive newspaper, radio and television coverage. N.S.W. was very close to Adelaide in their media coverage with good T.V. coverage and excellent penetration into schools/clubs etc. Victoria did receive reasonable coverage on the ABC T.V., although media relations obviously need to be fostered much more.

Organisation :

Of all states, S.A. was probably the best organised with numerous people all with specific tasks and all carrying them out. N.S.W. was also very well organised, although they did not appear to have as many helpers as S.A. Tasmania was reasonably organised, whilst Victoria's efforts hinged on very few people only.

Presentation:

The actual presentation of the games is of paramount importance, as it is the public showcase of volleyball. Smooth, professional, colourful presentation creates an image of professionalism. Again S.A. excelled with referees all outfitted the same, with expert ball boys all outfitted the same, with extremely competent and lovely hostesses, with door attendants, with programme sellers etc. for all games. N.S.W. was reasonably well organised in this area, although the venue did not lend itself to suitable presentation. Ballboys were not available for the exhibition games etc. Tasmania was quite well organised. Whilst in Victoria there were problems caused by lack of sufficient, trained assistants, and the difficulty caused by not having access to the main gym until approximately 7.00 p.m., which resulted in a late start and last minute rush efforts to put up the net etc.etc.

Summary :

Overall the accommodation/meals/excursions/receptions/transport of the tour were well handled by all states. Some states performed better than others in this area, but overall the Japanese were suitably pleased with our efforts.

There were marked variances between states in relation to Venue/Publicity/Organisation/Presentation. Victoria was probably the most disadvantaged state, due to the Easter break and the clash with the Australian Open Championships. South Australia without doubt put on the best performance.

If this tour showed anything, it was the following

- (1) Volleyball is promotable to the public.
- (2) The public will pay to see good volleyball.
- (3) The media will cover volleyball if we are prepared to make the effort to push them.
- (4) Some states are far more capable of handling tours than other states and this should be borne in mind for future tours and those states that excelled had the assistance of professional staff.
- (5) Tours are an excellent vehicle to publicise and promote volleyball.
- (6) Tours can be profitable in all spheres, in cluding dollars (5).

Recommendations :

- (1) There should be regular tours of Australia, preferably twice a year initially. Probably in March and in August (or October), and to cover all states if practicable.
- (2) The A.V.F. should organise and co-ordinate these tours on a national basis, with a 4-6 month "lead up" time. For example states should plan now for follow up tournaments after Pacific Rim.
- (3) That the states examine in detail their part of the tour and so determine where/who/what could be improved, or whether indeed they are capable of handling such tours, or have the right personnel to cope with it.
- (4) That some consideration be given to profit sharing between the A.V.F. and the States, so that the A.V.F. is able to recoup some of its costs (e.g. internal travel, Australian team etc.) However, it should also be recognised that tours can and should be a useful supplement to State budgets.