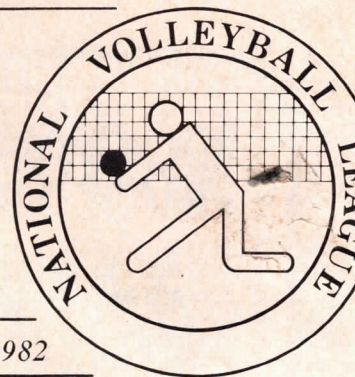


# AUSTRALIAN VOLLEYBALL NEWS



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## EDITORIAL.

Another year of profound changes and progress in Australian volleyball has drawn to an end.

The undisputed highlight of the year was the introduction of the National League with all its implications for volleyball development, promotability and progress. The usual Australian Championships for the age groups of Under 15, Under 17 and Under 20 as well as the Open, were conducted around Australia concluding the second decade of National Volleyball with the 20th Australian Championships for Men.

Australian teams travelled to the World Cup Qualifying Tournament in Hong Kong (Women), toured India (Men) and took part in the 1st Commonwealth

Championships in England (Men) and the Junior World Championships, Mexico (Under 20 Women). Last but not least, the Australian Volleyball News made its appearance earlier in the year and has rapidly become an integral part of the Australian Volleyball scene. A plea from the Editor is to keep in mind that only your participation can keep it this way. During the year there has been little response to requests for material, articles, photographs, etc.; nor has there been any indication from the readership on their likes and dislikes...Next year perhaps. We hope that you had a very Merry Christmas and that you will have a Happy 1982.

The Editor.



## WORLD CUP '81 JAPAN

In 1977 the fourth World Cup tournament to be conducted was played in 24 Japanese cities under the optimistic oriental slogan "The World is One; the Court is Ablaze with Excitement". It did not work out, the world is still divided. Perhaps this is the reason for the more modest format, 21 cities and the 1981 slogan "Faces of the World Compete".

### General Observations - Men:

Height, power, and skill were the features of the U.S.S.R. team, which went undefeated throughout the Cup. All facets of their game were strong, with a consistently powerful attack, a massive block and good reception and court cover.

Cuba, the second ranked team had a very strong attack and block, but lacked the setting skills of Zajtsev (Russia) and were very suspect with serve and spike reception.

Both Russia and Cuba were spiking and blocking nearly a metre above the net quite frequently, giving them a significant advantage over all other teams. Raul Vilches (Cuba) was voted "Best Spiker".

Brazil was very strong in desire and using spikers to good advantage and tight blocking and good reception, were able to win the bronze medal. Renan Dal Zotto was "Best Receiver". The future of Brazil appears very strong, as their performance in World Juniors was outstanding and several of these players played excellently in the World Cup.

Of the other teams to compete, there was insufficient height and system in their games to challenge the top two (Russia and Cuba).

Poland had a mixture of younger and older players, but lacked power and height.

China was quite skilful, and fast but similarly lacked height.

Japan was perhaps the most spirited team, but were unable to do better than sixth, although losing a number of five setter matches.

Italy and Tunisia were very much out of touch with the others and must look for taller players and much more technical development in their games.

Generally, there was a relatively high incidence of service faults, and blocking of the serve. "Sky ball" serves were rare, as was the spiked serve of a Chinese player.

Upon serve reception, many players fell backwards to the floor - perhaps as a means of elevating the dig, or countering the velocity of the serves, which were generally taken about five to eight metres behind the baseline.

The speed of the spiking attack was very fast for most teams with a variety of cross-overs and quick sets along the net.

### General Observations - Women:

The game systems employed by the top four teams, (China, Japan, Russia and U.S.A.) were based on the height of players and combined with generally fast combination attacks. China had a consistently tall team and played a fast attack aimed at splitting the block. It had the technical skills to perform in this style and showed an overall superiority to be undefeated throughout. A high spiking contact point was most noticeable, causing many problems for any team with short blockers. Flo Hyman (U.S.A.) received the "Best Spiker" award and was quite devastating in many matches. Korea had the most number of spikes during the Cup, but their spikes were least effective of any team. This situation was the result of sets not being wide enough and their spikers lacked sufficient height to penetrate the block successfully.

\* Blocking was again closely related to player height, and the taller teams were the most successful. Akhaminova (Russia) was the strongest blocker, while China was the quickest and best blocking team.

\* Serving was generally close to the net, fast and "floats". The Oriental teams normally employed a round arm action, with the other teams using a "tennis-type" action. Mizuhara (Japan) was voted "Best Server".

\* Service Reception technique was rather diverse, and indicated that emphasis is perhaps more on the outcome, rather than the technique. Consistency of reception was not as high as might be expected.

\* Hirose (Japan) was the most outstanding spike receiver, and many spike receptions were accurately placed to the setting position, throughout the matches. The agility of most larger players was very high, especially the U.S.A.

\* One-setters systems were standard, with the setter starting back to the net, and turning parallel to the net when actually setting the ball. Jump setting occurred with nearly half of all first attacks, as a means of deceiving blockers.