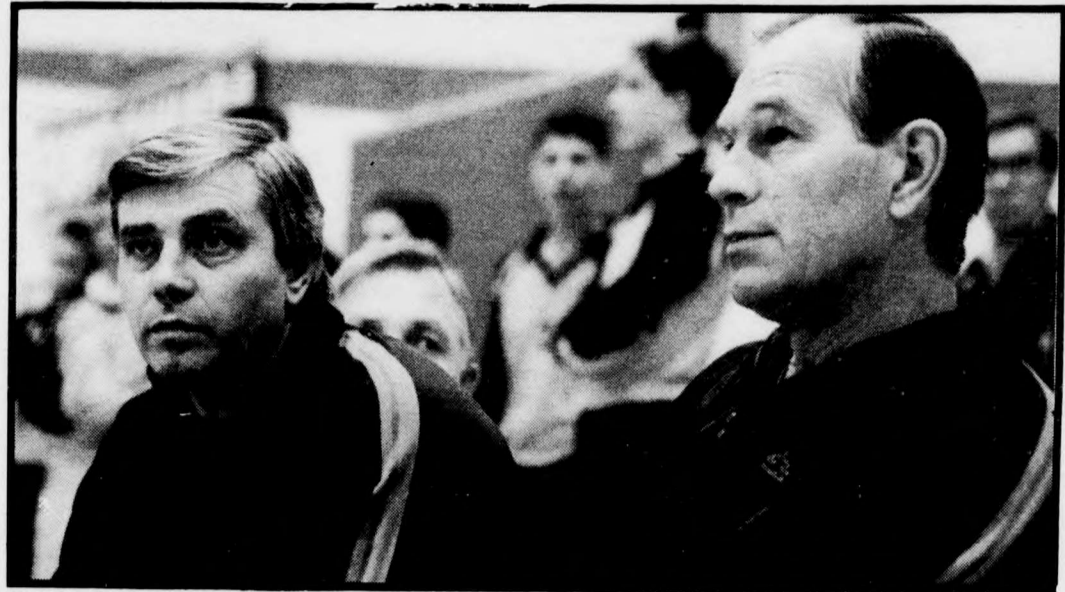


Canadian national team rolls over Lokomotiv

With an over 1,700 capacity crowd, the Tait Mackenzie gymnasium played host to Kiev Lokomotiv, a Soviet volleyball club team playing the second game of their cross-Canada tour. On a 9-game Canadian road trip, the Soviet volleyballers entered their second game coming off a dominating 3-0 victory in Kingston.

At the start of the first game it seemed like the taller Soviet team would once again hurt our national pride, but the Canadians came back to equalize the tourney 3-0 (15-10, 15-12, 15-10).

The solid Canadian defence was the deciding factor in the first game, but the Soviet inconsistencies in the second and third game made the physically stronger Lokomotiv look like overgrown amateurs.



Jennifer Crane

Shock: Lokomotiv coach Boris Terescuk and Valery Riabuhka look on as their squad goes down to defeat.

by Anton Katz

To say the least, the 14 players and two coaches representing the Kiev Lokomotiv volleyball team from the U.S.S.R. were an intimidating bunch at Tait Mackenzie last month. These guys were tough.

Accompanied by my Russian translator/volleyball expert, we approached Pavel Moisseenko, who has played on the U.S.S.R.'s national team. "Ya Zaniat," he said gruffly, which roughly translated means, "I'm busy." Head Coach Boris Terescuk explained that his players don't like to give interviews before the game. Fine. We'd get a good one after.

As we settled down on a hard bench, grateful for any seat at all,

we observed our surroundings. The Russians were taller (197 cm to 193 cm) and bigger than our Canadian squad. Dressed in track suits, the coaches and assistants looked on sternly. These four were shorter, grey-haired and didn't smile.

The visitors put on an impressive pre-game display. As spectators filed in wearing one of three souvenir shirts, Lokomotiv players practised setting, performed belly flops and practised spikes. Russian, English and French voices ood and aahed when Pavel Moisseenko started spiking from the backcourt.

Silence fell as three flags were hoisted into the air: the hammer and sickle, the Ukrainian flag and

our own Maple leaf. After the playing of the anthems the players from both sides were introduced. The Russians, dressed in blue and orange uniforms, came in doing high-fives. Stu Robbins, chair of York phys. ed., started things by presenting a York #2 shirt to Bill Knight, one of the best players in York volleyball history and a current member of the Canadian national team. Both teams shook hands and the game began.

The two teams had played the previous Wednesday in Hamilton, and considering a 3-0 Lokomotiv victory, the score in this game was surprising. Perhaps Canada won 3-0 because Lokomotiv was trying to sustain

interest for the teams' next meeting. It certainly appeared that way when the Soviet squad had missed 15 serves midway through the second game. Lokomotiv attacker Igor Abdrakhmanov offered a reason, "We were not used to the gym and different markings on floor."

The markings weren't the only surprise to the team. Where only one Lokomotiv player wore knee pads all of the Canadians did. Lokomotiv players also learned that the referees didn't understand Russian. An angry Soviet visitor was forced to point to parts of the body, lift his shoulders and display his best 'who me?' expression.

The game ran on smoothly

enough, thanks to members of a local volleyball club who distributed balls to the servers. A big blue Sport Canada banner gave the impression that all of Canada was behind the home team and indeed the crowd did cheer considerably. The crowd got especially involved when a ball got free and flew into the stands, bouncing off two heads, a back and a coat.

Before bowing out, the Lokomotiv took a time-out during the third game. My worthy assistant lip-read coach Terescuk's advice, "You've got to get the serve in even if you must do so underhanded." Indeed, the next server did not jump-serve. But by then it was too late.

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