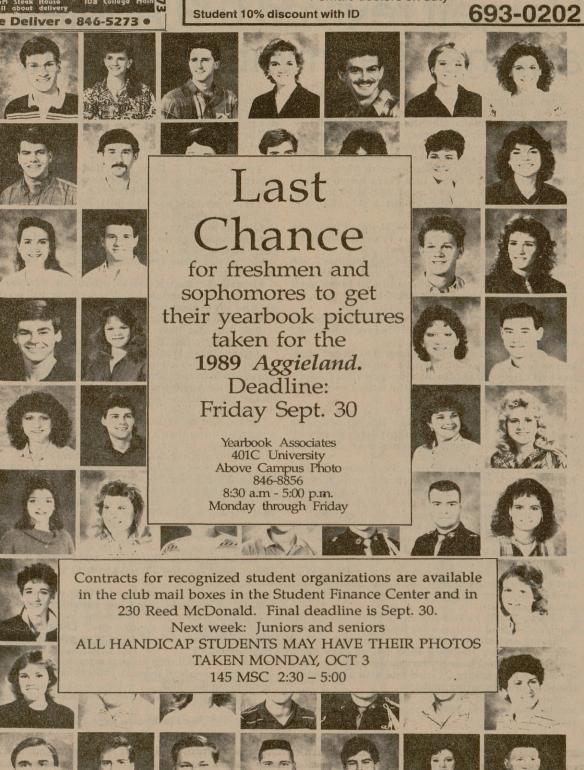


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U.S. chokehold is gone; J. archaic rules are at fault se

By Doug Walker
Assistant Sports Editor
Tuesday's loss by the United States Olympic basketball team to the Soviet Union made journalists around the world note the end of American dominance in in-

ternational amateur basketball.
Unlike the 1972 Olympic basketball final, in which the Soviets won after getting a third chance at making a last-second shot, the Soviets defeated the American

team fair and square on the court this time.

It was only the second American loss in 52 years of

It was only the second American loss in 52 years of Olympic basketball competition. It left me with the same sick feeling I get when I see film of the loss in the Munich Games of 1972.

In the loss at Munich, the United States was done in by a controversial ruling by international basketball officials which forced two replays of the game's final three seconds and snatched a gold medal from the Americans.

The latest loss brings to mind a question that has been floating around amateur athletics for the past few years: Should the United States send professionals to

the Olympics, and should the government finance athletes in sports such as track and field?

A move in the right direction was made a few years ago when the United States began allowing track and field performers to accept money for appearance fees at major track meets around the world.

It seems that if the United States wants to win in these competitions we must learn to play by the same rules as the competition. America should send a basket-

ball team of paid professionals to the Olympics.

This team could be either a team of NBA all-stars or the NBA champion of the Olympic year.

Soviet athletes in all sports compete as paid professionals while most American athletes competing against

them in these amateur sports festivals struggle for Soviet team members are paid by their government

Coach John Thompson's team did a fine job in the Olympic tournament and would have won the game if

to play the sport and have been together as a team for

forward Danny Manning had contributed offens, Manning, college basketball's player of the year, discore in the game against the Soviets.

Even though a bronze medal is nothing ashamed of, the Americans should be expected the gold every four years in this sport. Americal

greatest basketball league in the world - the NBA Historically, the players chosen for U.S. mitteams for international play are picked from our programs. They only play as a team for a few money before competing against, and usually beaung, to from other nations that have been playing together.

Other countries use American basketball as and and have only begun to catch up with us because A ica doesn't show the best it has to offer.

Probably the best route to follow is using the inchampion to compete as the U.S. team.

Think of the possibilities! Would the Soviet we stand a chance against the Laker fast break worthy and Magic Johnson would have a field day.

An NBA champion could complete the light champions him services in Lune take a more of the light champions him services in Lune take a more of the light champions him services in Lune take a more of the light champions him services in Lune take a more of the light champions him services in Lune take a more of the light champions him services in Lune take a more of the light champions him services in Lune take a more of the light champions him services in Lune take a more of the light champion could complete the light champions him services in Lune take a more of the light champion could complete the light champion could champion could complete the light champion could champion champion could champion champion champion champion champion champion champion champion c championship series in June, take a month off, the

gin touring against a team of NBA all-stars likeling rent Olympic team did.

Perhaps the team could also be bolstered by adding player, or two, from another NBA team to shoreup problems with depth. After the long regular sea schedule and playoff games the team may have just the lems with fatigue and injuries. Adding a player Larry Bird or Michael Jordan would certainly solve problem.

The only reservation I have about this idea is the many cases, the same people may be receiving that gold medals over and over again.

The governing forces for U.S. amateur bases

need to face the fact that America probably has seend of its domination of Olympic basketball if the

If the United States keeps this policy, American should get used to losing in international competitions. — just because we choose to play by archaicruls other countries refuse to follow.

Glasnost spreads to sports when

Maybe this basketball glasnost is tak-

ing things too far.

Look at the facts. When Soviet coach Alexander Gomelski met the media Wednesday after the Soviets' 82-76 humbling of the U.S. basket-ball squad, did he credit Mother Russia or Marxist-Leninist doctrine for the victory?

"United States basketball and NBA basketball helps my country," said the short, gray, grandfatherly Russian. "I am very happy, and thank you, United States basketball." Thank you, United States basket-

Gomelski was talking about the National Basketball Association, a decidedly capitalist outfit that has given comfort and aid to the Soviet

The Soviets have played exhibition games against the Milwaukee Bucks. The Atlanta Hawks toured the USSR and trained with the Soviets ets in the United Sates.

The Hawks have even spent draft choices on Alexandre Volkov, Raimondas Marchulionis and Valeri Tikhonenko in hopes the Soviet gov-ernment will let their stars play in

The Portland Trailblazers, with a first-round draft interest in Arvidas Sabonis, took in the 7-foot-3 Russian and supervised the therapy on his ruptured Achilles tendon

Sabonis was doubtful for the Olympics before he got NBA care. He paid back the kindness with 13 points and 13 rebounds against the United States on Wednesday.

At the post-game interview, U.S. Coach John Thompson noted the Sabonis recovery with some irony.

'He's been working hard all summer, and he's improved ... against America's finest," said Thompson, who has been critical about the chummy relationship between the Soviets and the NBA.

"I don't see it as a form of collaboration," he said. "Several NBA teams helped us, too. We lost. The NBA didn't. We understood the circumstances under which we were playing. Because I agree or disagree, that's totally different from blam-

ing."
Thompson wasn't so subdued a few months ago when he complained that the use of U.S. sports medicine to heal Sabonis was like Benedict Arnold handing the British the keys to the fort.

"I see Sabonis as being a fulfil-lment of Lenin's prophecy: The cap-italists are selling the Communists the rope they can hang us with," he said at the time. "We are in direct competition with them, and to prepare Sabonis to play against us just

Mon.-Sun.

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U.S. loss to U.S.S.R. two not isolated incident

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — This is not 1972, and this was no fluke.
The 82-76 loss to the Soviet Union

in the Olympic basketball semifinals Wednesday was the fourth straight railure in major international tournaments for U.S. men's teams so accustomed to ruling the world.

And, according to the coach who will play the Americans for the Olympic bronze medal Thursday might (Thursday morning, EDT)

night (Thursday morning EDT), there is good reason: The Americans are behind the times.

"The U.S. is a very young, inexperienced team ... and they paid the penalty for preparing the team within the United States," said Australian coach Advisor Huston. tralian coach Adrian Hurley. The 1987 World University

Games and the World Junior Championships both meant silver medals to Yugoslavia's golds. The Pan Am Games were a showcase for Oscar Schmidt, the shooter from Brazil who flew back with a gold medal while the United States again accepted silver.

But the loss to the Soviet Union came in the Olympics. The only blemish on the U.S. basketball record in the Games had been a loss to the Soviets in 1972 that was so tainted the silver medals were never accepted — they remain in a bank vault in Munich.

There was nothing tainted about this Soviet victory. The United States was beaten by a team that was never bothered by the Americans' most potent weapon — pressure defense — and a team which showed there is no substitute for international experience and competition. Hurley said the U.S. team should

get out of the country and play under international rules and with international referees. That talent isn't enough. You've got to play.

Well before the Olympics be U.S. coach John Thompson wing people that the system u

> cially considering that the bett ternational teams were using A can training methods and exper "Every year my team has competition with U.S. college ball teams," Soviet coach Alexa Gomelski said. "We played one ago against Milwaukee Bucks."

recently against Atlanta Hawks "United States basketball, "basketball help my county, happy. Thank you, United in basketball."

The United States did makes at the Soviets on Wednesday and within two points midway the second half after trailing

just after halftime. But the si held off all challenges and United States was faced with the sibility of no medal, let alo "I think they gave all they con represent their country and that's all their country can a

ask of them," Thompson said came here to win the gold medi were extremely disappointed didn't, but you get in it with a portunity to win and the possi of losing.

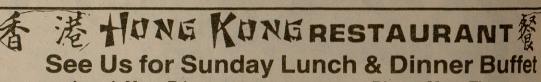
The future could be brid however. This tournamer probably the last played under where NBA players are be FIBA, the sport's international erning body, meets next month the motion to allow NBA plant expected to pass easily.

"That league has all the names," Soviet guard Shar Marchlionis said. "But it is differ If they play it will be no contest Just as it was for so many year

But is Thompson supposed to act like a diplomat or a general? That is the heart of the question facing U.S. sports officials and fans. Are the Olympic games a battle for world-wide basketball hegemony or an ex-change of friendship and the furtherance of international sports? In a world where President Rea-

John Thompson out of step?
Yes, said Glasnost Gone
whose basketball is much better.
that Ri his English. "The United States and Union organize good contact

tic, economic, in sports," h "All country, all people, very for this friendship. People the gan promises to share Star Wars seproblem and maybe Thomps crets once we figure them out, is understand this.'



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