



California Dreamin'

The USA women's volleyball team rose from nothing to an Olympic medal contender after its stay in Colorado Springs for over two years at the Olympic Training Center.



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California Dreamin' by Laurel Brassey

This article discusses the training and preparation of the USA women's and men's volleyball teams for the 1984 Olympic Games. The women's team, having spent over two years at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, has relocated to a new facility at Coto de Caza, California. Despite the retirement of seven members from the 1980 Olympic team, the team remains strong with seven returning members and six new ones. The men's team, on the other hand, is setting up its new training center in San Diego. Both teams have a busy schedule of competitions in various countries and are hopeful of winning medals in the 1984 Olympics. The article also highlights the support and facilities provided to the athletes, including educational and career opportunities, to ensure they can balance their athletic pursuits with their personal and professional lives.

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Below find a reprint of the 4 relevant pages of the article "California Dreamin'" in "The Olympian":

KATHY ARENDSSEN
Wizard with a Fast-pitchby Laurel Brassey
(Miss Brassey was a member
of the U.S. National Team and
1980 Olympic Volleyball
Team)The USA women's volleyball team
rose from nothing to an Olympic
medal contender after its stay in
Colorado Springs for over two years
at the Olympic Training Center. They
feel they'll be as strong in 1984.

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Although the 1984 Olympic Games are still somewhat distant, the Men's and Women's National Volleyball Teams aren't wasting any time getting started training. As 1980 Olympian Rita Crockett put it, "Three years and four months to be exact. Somehow that makes it seem easier."

The women have already begun practicing at their new facility at Coto de Caza, California. After an extended vacation, the women regrouped in early January. The team is quite a bit different because of the retirement of seven members of the 1980 Olympic team. But with the seven returning members providing a strong nucleus and six new members, it looks as though the team will continue its amazing progress.

Coto de Caza is a small private community of about two hundred homes tucked away in the hills just east of Mission Viejo, California. Most of the homes are built in close proximity to the club house complex which adjoins the main lobby and restaurant, men's and women's locker and shower rooms, saunas, gymnasium for volleyball and basketball, and a small weight room. There is also a twenty-five-meter swimming pool and seventeen tennis courts.

The women are living a different life from that at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, where they lived in 1979-80. They have their own apartments or share with other members of the team. Many are attending school either at U.C. Irvine or Orange Coast Community College. Others have taken part-time jobs. In the next two years most of them should be able to finish school so that as 1984 draws nearer they can devote more time to training. Presently, practices are three days a week for the entire team and two additional days for the new players.

Head Coach Dr. Arie Selinger, who has been rehired as the National Women's Coach, sees a

promising future for the new team. "The transition periods are always the hardest," says Selinger. "The team is so far away from its goals at this point. Nothing seems close enough to grasp. They have to readjust to new lifestyles, new techniques, new players, new systems of offense and defense and cope with the frustration of losing during this period. Once they can assimilate all of this, it's just a matter of time until they come together as a unit. This new group has all the tools height (averaging 6'-1") strength, quickness and intelligence." The staff is rounded out by Yoshi Yoshida, the team's expert Japanese trainer, his new bride, Shoko, who was a member of the 1976 Gold medal-winning Japanese Women's Volleyball Team, and manager Ruth Becker.

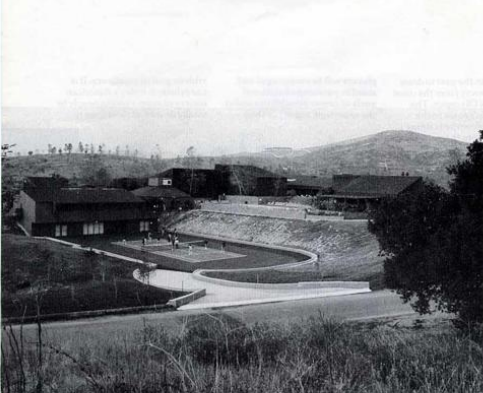
The team has a full summer of competition in Japan, China, Europe, Mexico, and then some fall tours in the U.S.

All of the members and staff of the 1980 Olympic Women's Volleyball Team will never forget the people of Colorado Springs and the U.S.O.C. for their continued support, and for making their stay in the Springs a memorable one. The team will be back in Colorado Springs at some time in the future for training and competition before heading to Mexico City.

Meanwhile, about fifty miles south of Coto de Caza in San Diego, the Men's National Volleyball Team is setting up headquarters for its new training center. Don Sammis, owner of a major real estate developing company in San Diego, worked for about six months to put the project together. Sammis has been a volleyball enthusiast for years and recently owned a franchise in a professional Volleyball League.

From 1977-1980 the men's team training center was located in Dayton Ohio. Many of the top young players attended colleges or universities on the West Coast on athletic scholarships and it has

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The new training base
for the U.S. women's
volleyball team is this
lush setting at Coto de
Caza in Southern California,
where hopes
are high for another
run at an Olympic
medal in 1984.

athletics without compensation from private sponsors, corporations, scholarships, or by allowing the athlete to work part-time.

Sammis, along with businessman Chuck Rolles, is coordinating a job placement program based on the USOC's Olympic Job Opportunities Program, whereby an employer contributes by hiring an athlete to work four hours a day but pays him for full time, the salaries commensurate with the type of job. An athlete will also receive broken time payment while he is away from his job traveling with the team. The older members of the team will be placed in career oriented jobs so that when they finish their careers in volleyball they will have training in another field. The athletes still in college will be placed in non-career oriented jobs such as work in restaurants, unless they want career opportunities. The program proved very successful in Dayton. A Board of Directors will be established for the program including

civic leaders and businessmen of San Diego.

The U.S. Volleyball Association has hired 33-year-old Doug Beal as head coach for the quadrennial. Doug was a member of the National Team for 9 years and previously coached the team from 1977-1979. Doug selected Bill Neville, currently of Montana State University at Bozeman, to be the assistant coach.

The San Diego training center will operate on a nine month, full time schedule with a three month alternate activity such as a youth league and clinics. It will directly benefit from the USOC's programs of the National Sports Festival, U.S. Olympic Training Center, and Sports Medicine Program. Also a major contribution are the USVBA's fundraising programs and contracts with business corporations.

The staff has high hopes for the men's program and the team. The junior level and college programs in the U.S. are showing great pro-

gress. The Men's Jr. Team finished seventh in the Jr. Worlds and won the Pacific Rim Tournament in 1979. "We're making a strong move forward in U.S. volleyball," says Beal. "There are a lot of young talented athletes." Ma of the best athletes are getting into volleyball, as is evident who one considers 6'-9" Craig Buckle Pepperdine. He's tall, strong and quick and has lots of potential. When asked what he has in mind for the new team Beal had this to say: "We want to have sixty international matches a year with at least half of those inside the States so we can promote the sport. We also like to develop an annual international tournament in San Diego and continue our junior program in the summer month with the possibility of an additional Christmas competition for them. I plan to use two setters instead of one, which is different from American teams of the past. I expect us to be very strong at the net. We'll be relatively young compared to the other teams. We expect to be contenders for an Olympic medal in 1984."

The members of the team began gathering in late April with their first competition set for early July in Southern California against the Brazilian National Team. Like the women's team, the men have a busy summer full of travel and competition.

It looks as though both the men's and women's national volleyball teams have all the ingredients they need to pick up some medals in 1984. With a little luck on our side they could indeed be gold ones.

Hope has replaced the
tears that were shed
by Debbie Landreth
(left), Laurel Brassey
and Debbie Green
when the team played
its final match in Colorado
Springs in 1980.
Photo by Bruce HargerThe "new" U.S. National Women's
Volleyball team gathers for an
informal portrait with head coach Dr. Arie
Selinger (left) at his new home in California.
Seven members of the 1980
Olympic team have retired.
Photo by Laurel Brassey