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CBS News



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U.S. Olympic Committee's Secret Weapon: Biomechanics

The U.S. Olympic Committee is investing heavily in the science of biomechanics, a secret weapon that could put the U.S. team years ahead of its competitors. The budget for the 1984 games is over \$71 million, almost five times the amount spent on the 1976 games.

Dr. Gideon Ariel, an Israeli-born computer science expert, has refined and perfected the use of biomechanics in training athletes. The process involves taking several hours to set up a sequence of motion pictures, transferring frame-by-frame the angle of each joint from the film to the computer, and finding errors that cannot be seen by the camera or the human eye alone.

This technique has already shown promising results. For instance, Al Order, a four-time Olympic gold medalist in discus, was able to improve his technique and throw the discus further than ever before after his technique was processed by the biomechanics computer.

The biomechanics computer is also being used to analyze the performance of competitors, helping the U.S. team learn from their techniques. The U.S. women's volleyball team, for example, has already benefited from the analysis of the Japanese champions.

Olympic athletes will continue to work intensively with the biomechanics laboratory in preparation for the 1984 games.

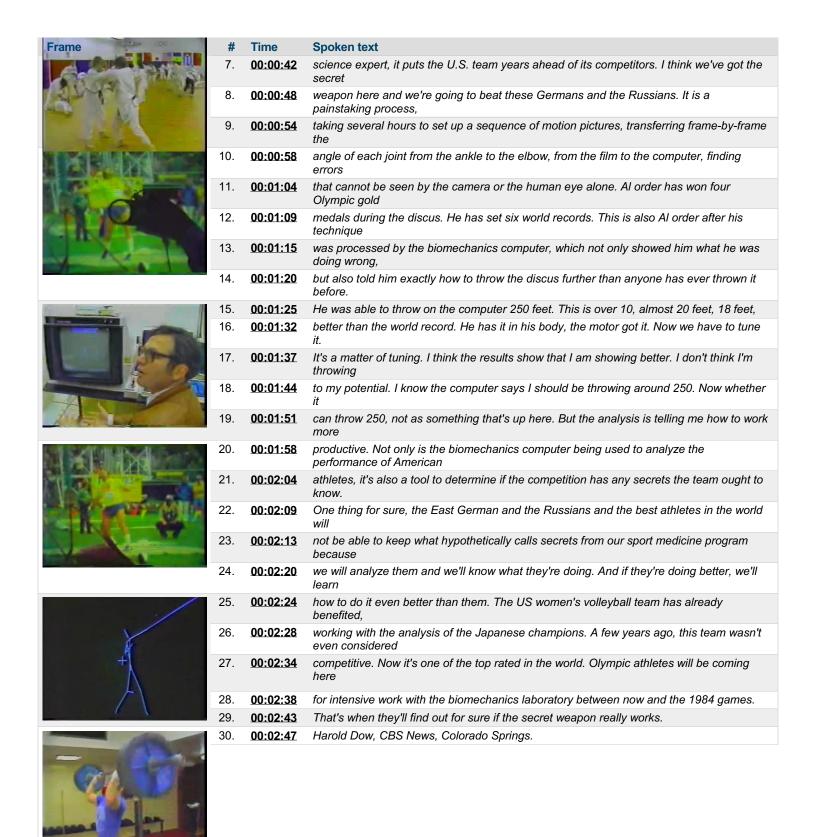
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Total tokens: 945

Audio transcription

Frame	#	Time	Spoken text
	0.	00:00:00	Games are held every four years but to the athletes that quadrennial event is a matter of just about
	1.	00:00:05	perennial preparation. And these days, as Harold Downell reports from the U.S. Olympic Committee
	2.	00:00:10	National Training Center, the stopwatch and tape measure are supplemented by the computer.
	3.	00:00:19	It's almost as if the United States Olympic Committee is preparing for war, not games in 1984.
	4.	<u>00:00:25</u>	The budget is more than \$71 million, almost five times the amount spent on the 1976 games,
	5.	00:00:31	and they will make maximum use of what they call their secret weapon. The science of biomechanics
	6.	00:00:37	is not new in itself, but as refined and perfected by Dr. Gideon Ariel, an Israeli-born computer



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