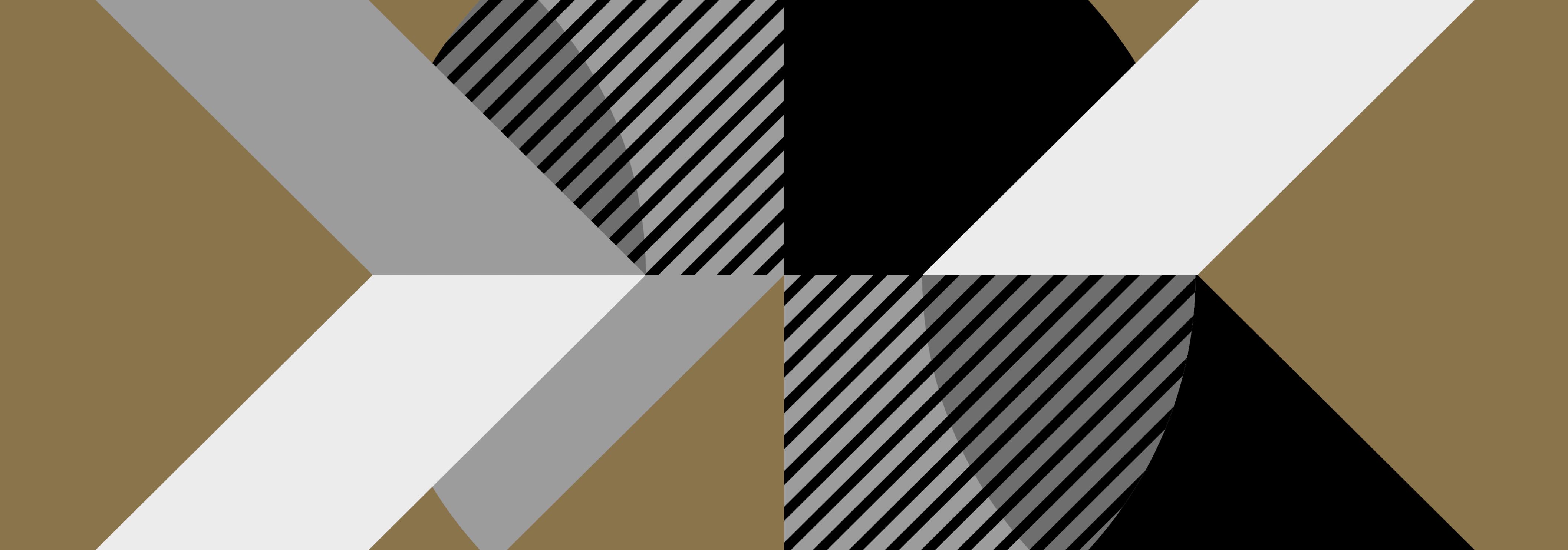
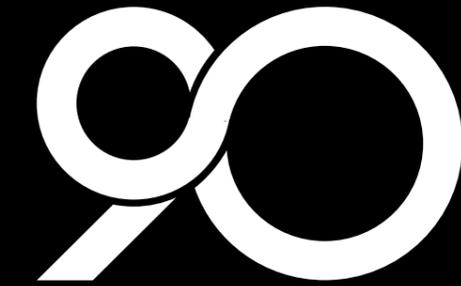


90

ICONIC MOMENTS
1932 - 2022







ICONIC MOMENTS
1932 - 2022



INTRODUCTION BY FIBA PRESIDENT & SECRETARY GENERAL

We are delighted and proud to mark FIBA's 90th anniversary with a celebration of our rich history and by charting just some of the iconic moments that have contributed to our evolution and success. While the 90 headline moments showcased in this book have undoubtedly shaped our journey enormously, we appreciate there have been hundreds, if not thousands more moments shared by the entire global FIBA family down the years. It is this cumulative weight of action by everyone who loves our sport that has brought FIBA to this exciting juncture. We can look forward to the next decade and reaching our landmark 100-year anniversary with tremendous optimism. Yet none of this would have been possible without the pioneers and founding National Federations of Argentina,

Czechoslovakia, Italy, Greece, Latvia, Portugal, Romania and Switzerland, alongside the phenomenal work of each FIBA Secretary General in Dr William Jones, Borislav Stankovic and Patrick Baumann. Their respective leadership in tandem with the National Federations that joined along the way, their leagues, clubs, coaches, players, officials, administrators and other members of the FIBA family, working both on and off the court, has fueled the incredible growth and popularity of basketball globally. The sport of basketball has never been more accessible to play and watch. As a governing body that is dedicated to providing opportunities across all levels of the game, FIBA can be immensely proud of today's status of

the sport. This anniversary is not about 90 years of FIBA's mere existence. It's about celebrating 90 years of laying the foundations, planting the seeds of growth, nurturing the sport, learning, evolving, looking to the future and embracing new innovations. But perhaps most special of all, it's how we continue to do this as one global FIBA basketball family – together. Now our journey continues and we can't wait to create with you many more iconic moments during these next years.

Hamane Niang
FIBA PRESIDENT

Andreas Zagklis
FIBA SECRETARY GENERAL

01.

FIRST FIBA SECRETARY GENERAL, WILLIAM JONES GROWS THE GLOBAL GAME OVER FOUR DECADES



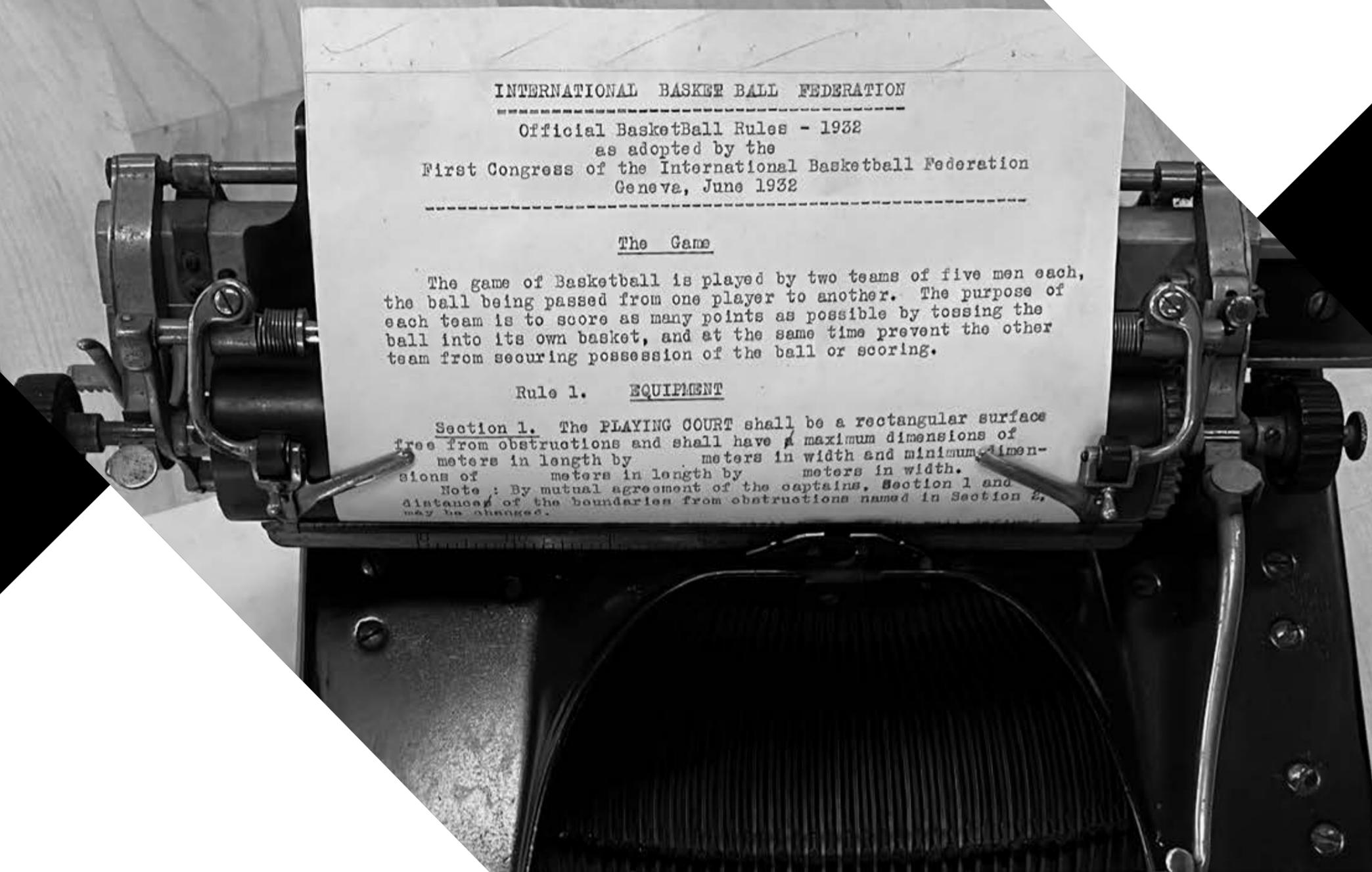
World basketball would not be what it is today without the immeasurable contributions of William Jones, the first FIBA Secretary General who led the organization for more than four decades. Born in 1906, Jones traveled to the United States as a teenager and attended Springfield College in Massachusetts, where basketball had been invented in 1891. Graduating in 1928 he returned to Europe to study and helped introduce basketball to Switzerland in 1929, before playing a leading role in FIBA's foundation during 1932. Appointed the first FIBA Secretary General by the eight founding National Federations, he was the driving force behind so many firsts, including IOC recognition and basketball becoming an Olympic sport. Inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1964, he also served as FIBA Secretary General Emeritus from 1976 to 1981, before passing at the age of 74. He was posthumously inducted into the FIBA Hall of Fame in 2007. In 2015, a statue honoring him was unveiled in front of FIBA's Headquarters.



02.

IT'S 1932 AND
FIBA IS BORN

Some 90 years ago, an amazing journey started for FIBA (Fédération Internationale de Basketball Amateur). It was on June 18, 1932 when the National Federations of Argentina, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Romania and Switzerland became the founding FIBA members. It was American Elmer Berry and the Swiss Leon Bouffard who had recognized the growing need to create a world governing body for basketball. They arranged the historic meeting where delegates wrote and signed a resolution that established the organization, determined the first by-laws of the sport and a unified set of playing rules. The interpreter at the event, William Jones, showed such a great understanding of international basketball and had such good ideas that he was immediately elected as the first-ever Secretary General.



03.

FIBA HEADQUARTERS: FROM ROME TO GENEVA, VIA BERN AND MUNICH

The magnificent "Patrick Baumann House of Basketball" hasn't always been the site of FIBA's headquarters and is the fourth in a nomadic history. Located in Geneva during 1932 when formed, it switched to Rome within months and stayed there until 1940, when it moved to Bern due to the Second World War. In 1976 FIBA Secretary General Borislav Stankovic initiated a relocation to Munich, where it remained for several decades. During 2000, eight cities bid to be the location of FIBA's future headquarters, with the Central Board choosing a switch back to Geneva in 2002. In 2008, an 8,500 square metre plot of land was purchased in Mies, on the city's outskirts and in 2013, the dream was complete. The official inauguration of the amazing state-of-the-art building took place on June 18 - the day of FIBA's anniversary. Shaped like a hand, the spectacular building can even be seen when flying into Geneva Airport. It also incorporates a steel structure reminiscent of the woven basketball net. The headquarters houses FIBA staff, the FIBA Foundation, a FIBA Conference Centre, the FIBA Hall of Fame, the Exhibition Hall, the Pedro Ferrandiz Library and even its own 3x3 court.



04.

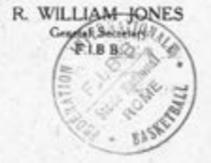
FIRST FIBA RULES OF THE GAME DRAWN UP IN 1932

Until 1932, basketball rules had largely been spoken about as the "American rules", with the rest of the world developing various versions. The fact that rules were not standardized internationally was something that needed urgent attention. The formation of FIBA facilitated this much needed unification, led by first FIBA President Leon Bouffard and Secretary General William Jones. The first-ever standardized international rules consisted of both teams having five players, with two substitutes coming into play twice during the game. Following every point scored from the field or from a free throw, the game continued via a jump ball at the centre of the court. It was decided the rules would be revised every four years by FIBA's Technical Commission, coinciding with the Olympic Games.



These Basketball Rules have been adopted by the First International Basketball Congress, held at Geneva, Switzerland, on the 18th of June 1932.

These Rules will not be changed until the next plenary Assembly of the F.I.B.B. in 1936, and will be the governing Rules for all international matches, including those to be held in connection with the Olympic Games.



**Fédération Internationale de Basketball
International Basketball Federation
F.I.B.B.**

FONDÉE EN 1932.
SIÈGE SOCIAL: *Stade National, Rome, Italie.*
ADRESSE TÉLÉGRAPHIQUE: *Cont-Fibb, Rome.*
CHÈQUES POSTAUX: *N. I. 4847, Genève.*

Afin de faciliter une plus grande diffusion du Basketball, la F. I. B. B. est organisée de la façon suivante:
un Bureau Central,
des Commissions Continentales.
Les Commissions Continentales représentent le Bureau Central, propagent, surveillent et contrôlent le Basketball dans leur Zone.

BUREAU CENTRAL
Président: M. Léon Bouffard, Suisse.
Vice-Président: M. le Comte Giorgio Asinari di San Marzano, Italie.
Secrétaire Général: Mr. R. William Jones, Rome, Italie.
Trésorier: Me. Maurice Abramowicz, Genève, Suisse.
Membres du Bureau: M. Angelo Braccas Haedo, (président de la Commission Continentale Sud Américaine) Argentine.
M. Frank Marek, (président de la Commission Continentale Europe de l'Est) Tchécoslovaquie.
M. Henry A. Brandt, Portugal.

Le Basketball, joué actuellement dans le monde entier, mérite, à l'instar des autres grands sports, une organisation internationale autonome. A la demande des Fédérations Tchécoslovaque, Suisse et Portugaise, Monsieur le Docteur Elmer Berry, Directeur de l'École Internationale des Y.M.C.A., de Genève, a convoqué, en juin 1932, à Genève, les représentants de plusieurs pays en un Premier Congrès International de Basketball, au cours duquel la Fédération Internationale de Basketball (F.I.B.B.) fut fondée.

L'activité déployée par la F.I.B.B. est très appréciée, et cela prouve à l'évidence que la fondation de la F.I.B.B. répondait à un réel besoin.

Les organes techniques présentent aujourd'hui les Premières Règles Internationales obligatoires pour toutes les rencontres autorisées par la F.I.B.B.. Ces Règles tiennent compte des expériences faites dans tous les pays, et donneront certainement satisfaction à tous les joueurs.

Nous formulons le vœux que ces règles soient bien étudiées et qu'elles facilitent les rencontres internationales. La F.I.B.B. recevra en tout temps, avec grand plaisir, toute observation susceptible d'améliorer les Règles de Basketball. Le Comité Central de la F.I.B.B. souhaite que ces règles soient appliquées et observées dans le plus bel esprit sportif.

La collaboration entre joueurs et arbitres est indispensable pour faire du Basketball le jeu le plus court, le plus rapide et le plus beau.

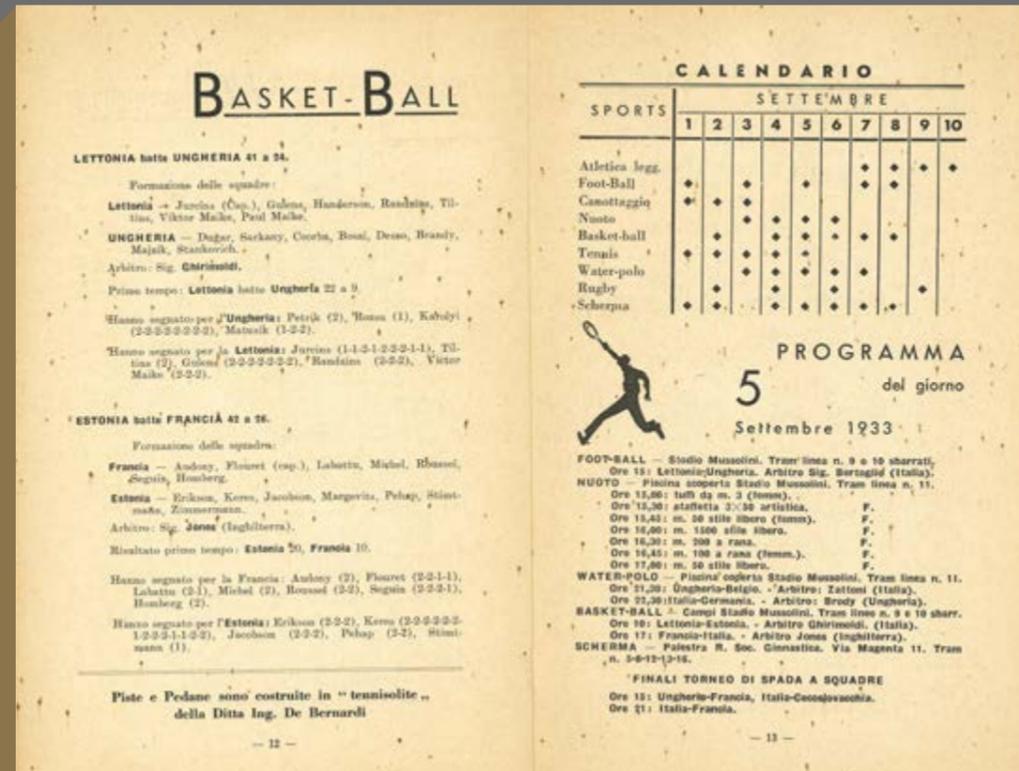
LÉON BOUFFARD
président de la F.I.B.B.
Genève, Avril 1933



05.

GO-TIME FOR FIBA WITH FIRST INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION AT THE 1933 UNIVERSITY GAMES

Just a year after its birth, FIBA showed a major statement of intent by having the rules of the game adopted by FIBA used for the first time in an international tournament as part of the 1933 University Games. Organized by the Confédération internationale des étudiants (CIE) in Turin, Italy it was the forerunner of the Universiade and overall, some 27 nations competed in nine sports. Teams from France, Italy, Estonia, Latvia and Hungary also played to the newly formed FIBA rules, which were used for the first time in an international competition. Importantly, FIBA Secretary General William Jones acted as Technical Director of the basketball tournament. Meanwhile, the combination of National Federations meeting again in person and seeing the rules working in practice strengthened their united effort to take the global sport of basketball forwards.



06.

IOC RECOGNITION OF FIBA A DEFINING MOMENT FOR BASKETBALL

The endorsement of FIBA by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1935 ignited a powerful relationship with the movement. The famous and historic document of recognition was signed by the President of the International Olympic Committee, Henri de Baillet-Latour, with William Jones signing in his capacity as FIBA Secretary General. The most important aspect was that with 23 teams subsequently participating for the first time at the Games, the IOC recognition was truly the pivotal first footstep in basketball establishing a distinguished Olympic legacy. While the debut of the sport in Berlin during 1936 would certainly prove to be eventful, the sport has enjoyed a long and rich tradition at the Olympics over the years. This included the successful addition of 3x3 basketball for Tokyo 2020. FIBA's alignment with the IOC has moved from strength to strength over the years. This has been accelerated and consolidated through the involvement in various programs, particularly the close collaboration through the Olympic Solidarity global development initiative.



CITIUS · ALTIUS · FORTIUS

R. 71/1227

COMITÉ INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIQUE
MON REPOS, LAUSANNE, SUISSE
ADRESSE TÉLÉGRAPHIQUE : CIO, LAUSANNE

Le 11 mars 1935.

Monsieur le Secrétaire Général,

Le Comité International Olympique, donnant suite à la décision qu'il avait prise en 1934 à Athènes et ayant appris que l'accord est intervenu entre la Fédération Internationale de Basketball et la Fédération Internationale de Handball Amateur, a décidé que la Fédération Internationale de Basketball sera portée sur la liste des Fédérations Internationales reconnues par le C.I.O. et admise à régir les tournois de Basketball qui seront organisés lors des Jeux Olympiques.

La F.I.B.B. voudra bien désigner son délégué au Conseil des Délégués des Fédérations Internationales (art. 10 et 11 des Statuts du C.I.O.).

Veillez agréer, Monsieur le Secrétaire général, l'assurance de mes meilleurs sentiments.

LE PRESIDENT DU C.I.O.

Baillet-Latour

Monsieur R.W. William Jones,
Secrétaire général de la Fédération Internationale de Basketball.

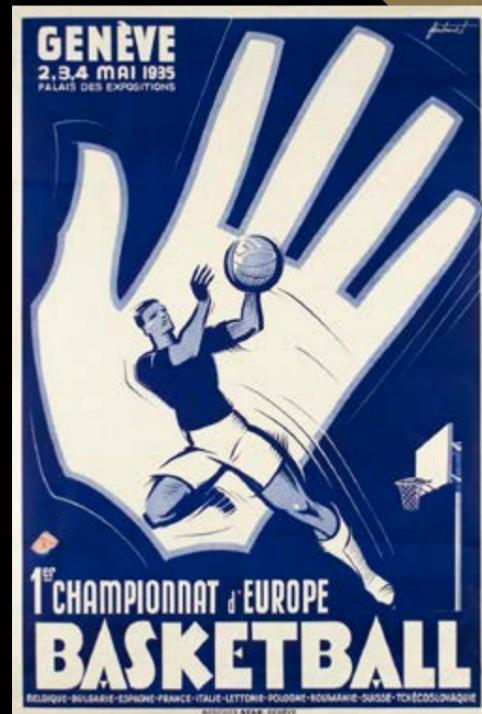
R O M E.



07.

IN THE BEGINNING...
EUROBASKET 1935
IN GENEVA

In 1935, the first FIBA EuroBasket was staged in Geneva and involved Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Romania, Spain, and hosts Switzerland. Even if there were no high-flying dunks, game-winning three-pointers or sensational swats, the event proved special and some say the most important in tournament history. That eventual champions Latvia and silver medalists Spain even made it to Geneva was a story in itself. Spanish Basketball Federation President Gonzalo Aguirre had to dip into his own pockets to fund the travel, while Latvia went by train, in a third-class rail car, and it took 36 hours. Despite the efforts of tournament MVP Rafael Martin for Spain, Latvia won 24-18 in front of 2,000 spectators for what remains their first and only title. The triumph was immortalized in an inspiring 2012 Latvian film called "Dream Team 1935".



08.

BASKETBALL'S RAINY BUT SUCCESSFUL 1936 OLYMPIC DEBUT IN BERLIN

Basketball first featured at the 1936 Olympic Games two years after a decision by the Local Organizing Committee to put basketball on the menu. Getting the thumbs up in 1934 for the most prestigious and biggest sporting event in the world gave basketball the chance to showcase itself like never before. Although rain marred the Final in Berlin, the USA capped a successful debut with a victory over Canada to take the sport's first Olympic gold. It was markedly different to the basketball spectacle that has taken place in the past half-century or so at the Olympic Games. Played outdoors on clay, and in the absence still of the shot clock rule, the speed of the game was slower. "Mother Nature" also got in the way when heavy rain disrupted the medal games. Mexico beat Poland, 26-12 to take bronze, while USA beat Canada 19-8 in the Final, with Joe Fortenberry scoring 8 points. It was a challenging baptism for basketball, but the fans loved it and there would be nothing but passion and success for the sport at future Olympic editions.



09.

ALL SMILES FOR THE AZZURRE AS HOSTS WIN FIRST-EVER FIBA WOMEN'S EUROBASKET

It was a pivotal moment for the women's game when Italy stood on the top of the podium at the first-ever edition of the FIBA Women's EuroBasket. This famous 1938 landmark tournament tipped off what has arguably morphed into one of the most exciting, unpredictable and intense competitions in the FIBA Women's basketball calendar. Sporting very different official uniforms from the modern era, those who took to the outdoor clay court were real pioneers. Italy came out on top against Lithuania, Poland, France and Switzerland. Anna Maria Giotto starred with 30 points in the four games, Italy only losing against eventual silver medalists Lithuania. The legacy of Giotto and her teammates was celebrated in 2019 when at 103 years-old and as the only survivor, she helped curator Alessandro Orrico showcase an exhibition of the famous tournament.



10.

USA REPEAT GOLD AS OLYMPICS RETURN - A FUTURE FIBA PRESIDENT ON SIDELINES

USA celebrated the return of the Olympics with the gold medal at the 1948 London Games, while France had a future FIBA President on the sidelines. Back for the first time since the Second World War, 23 nations participated. France flew the European flag by defeating Chile 53-52 in a thrilling Quarter-Finals game, then beating Brazil. With stars from AAU champions Phillips 66ers and 1948 NCAA champs University of Kentucky, USA went unbeaten, blasting past France 65-21 to land gold, with Brazil beating Mexico 52-47 for bronze. France was coached by the iconic Robert Busnel, who won seven French League titles as a player and was also player-coach during his nation's FIBA EuroBasket 1948 success. Joining the FIBA Central Board in 1956, he was French Federation Basketball President from 1967 to 1980, President of the Standing Conference of Europe from 1976 until 1982 and then served as FIBA President from 1984 until 1990. Passing away in 1991, Busnel was enshrined into the FIBA Hall of Fame as a contributor in 2007.



11.

THE FIBA BASKETBALL WORLD CUP PREMIERE IN BUENOS AIRES



The FIBA Basketball World Cup was first staged in 1950 at Luna Park in Buenos Aires, Argentina. FIBA Secretary General William Jones had watched fans cheer basketball enthusiastically at the Olympics and believed the sport could also thrive with its own competition. France and Spain shared a plane to Argentina to cut down on expenses. Reigning European champions Egypt also took part, along with Chile, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador and Yugoslavia. The late Borislav Stankovic, who would later become FIBA's second Secretary General, played at the event and was enthused about the huge crowds. The Final pitted hosts Argentina against a USA side with players from AAU side Denver Chevrolets. FIBA Hall of Famers Ricardo Gonzalez and Oscar Furlong played for Argentina, who got it done 64-50. Celebrations continued all night as people lit newspapers on fire. This marked the start of the Argentinian tradition of the "Night of Torches".

12.

TRAILBLAZERS STEP OUT IN CHILE FOR MAIDEN FIBA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL WORLD CUP

It was a landmark moment when female ballers congregated in Chile during 1953 for the inaugural FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, France, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Switzerland and USA were all present. There was huge excitement in Santiago, with a specially built wooden platform constructed inside the national stadium and 30,000 fans watching a pulsating climax. Hosts Chile faced USA in the last game with an identical 3-1 record but had to settle for silver. Pauline Bowden netted 17 points in a 49-36 victory for USA. France took bronze as Anne-Marie Golchen finished the tournament as leading scorer with 19.2 points per game. However, the USA were unable to take their prestigious silverware home because of its sheer size. The trophy was too big to fit through the "bomb bay" doors of the U.S. B-17 airplane.



13.

USA WIN AT RIO WORLD CUP AND PHILIPPINES MAKE HISTORY

The USA claimed their first FIBA Basketball World Cup title when it was held for the second time, in 1954, but just as notable was the accomplishment of the Philippines. Their famed bronze medal remains the only time in history that an Asian nation has stood on the podium. Staged in Rio de Janeiro, instead of Sao Paulo due to storm damage, it was a huge spectacle inside the Maracanazinho stadium. While a politically impacted field, it was still competitive with USA, runners-up Brazil and the third-placed Philippines joined by France, Formosa, Uruguay, Canada, Israel, Paraguay, Chile, Yugoslavia and Peru. USA went undefeated and were represented by AAU powerhouse Peoria Caterpillars. Kirby Minter averaged 11.1 points per game to spearhead their success. With 35,000 spectators present for the Final, USA won 62-41 against the hosts and their legendary player Wlamir Marques. The Philippines were led by the revered Carlos Loyzaga, aka "The Big Difference" and famously beat France, as well as the Oscar Moglia inspired Uruguay.



14.

ASK RIGA WRITE HISTORY AS FIRST WINNERS OF THE EUROPEAN CUP FOR CHAMPION CLUBS FOR MEN

ASK Riga will forever hold a place in basketball history as winners of the first European Cup for Champion Clubs for Men in 1958. Located in modern day Latvia, Riga's ASK defeated Bulgarian side Academic Sofia 170-152 in a two-legged Final. Superstar Janis Krumins led the way on court. The idea for the competition was based on football's European Cup, with FIBA Secretary General William Jones keen for basketball to follow in its footsteps. History was made on February 22, 1958 when Royal IV CSA of Belgium and BBC Etzella of Ettelbruck, Luxembourg, played the first game. The biggest positive was 125,000 fans attending the 39 games during the inaugural season. But politics caused some to be forfeited, including a Semi-Final when the Spanish government refused to allow Real Madrid to face ASK Riga in the Soviet Union. ASK Riga would also capture the next two league titles and finish runner-up in 1960-61.



15.



BRAZIL TOP FIBA BASKETBALL WORLD CUP PODIUM FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 1959

Brazil secured their maiden FIBA Basketball World Cup at the third edition in 1959 in Chile. Construction delays during 1958 at Santiago's Metropolitan Indoor Stadium led to the Estadio Nacional de Chile soccer stadium being converted to accommodate 16,000 spectators months later. Brazil won the title despite two defeats to the Soviet Union, who made their first appearance at the World Cup after missing 1950 and 1954. USSR were gold medal favorites having beaten USA 62-37 in what was their first ever FIBA Basketball World Cup game. But their government banned them playing Formosa (Chinese Taipei) due to political disagreements. They forfeited and dropped to sixth place in the Final Phase standings. Brazil cemented the title with a 5-1 Final Round record, fuelled by MVP Amaury Pasos, with USA silver medalists and hosts Chile taking bronze. When Brazil's players returned home they were celebrated as heroes. The title boosted the sport, making fans in the country hungry for even more success.



16.

HOME COMFORT FOR SOVIET UNION AS MOSCOW EVENT SPARKS STUNNING GOLD RUSH

The FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 1959 saw Europe host for the first time, Asia gaining representation on court and the Soviet Union sparking an era of total dominance. The hosts delivered stylishly in Moscow with seven straight wins against Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Republic of Korea, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia. Led by Skaidrite Smildzinia-Budovska and capitalizing on the absence of defending champions USA, they became the first European champions of the competition and it sparked an amazing gold rush of five consecutive titles. Bulgaria took silver thanks to unstoppable center and FIBA Hall of Fame member Vanya Voynova. Inspired by Dagmar Hubalkova, Czechoslovakia took a first medal with a bronze and it would be the first of six medal finishes in a row. The event also witnessed a first participating nation from Asia, with the Republic of Korea taking to the floor.



17.

WHEN PHILIPPINES REIGNED SUPREME AT THE FIRST FIBA ASIA CUP

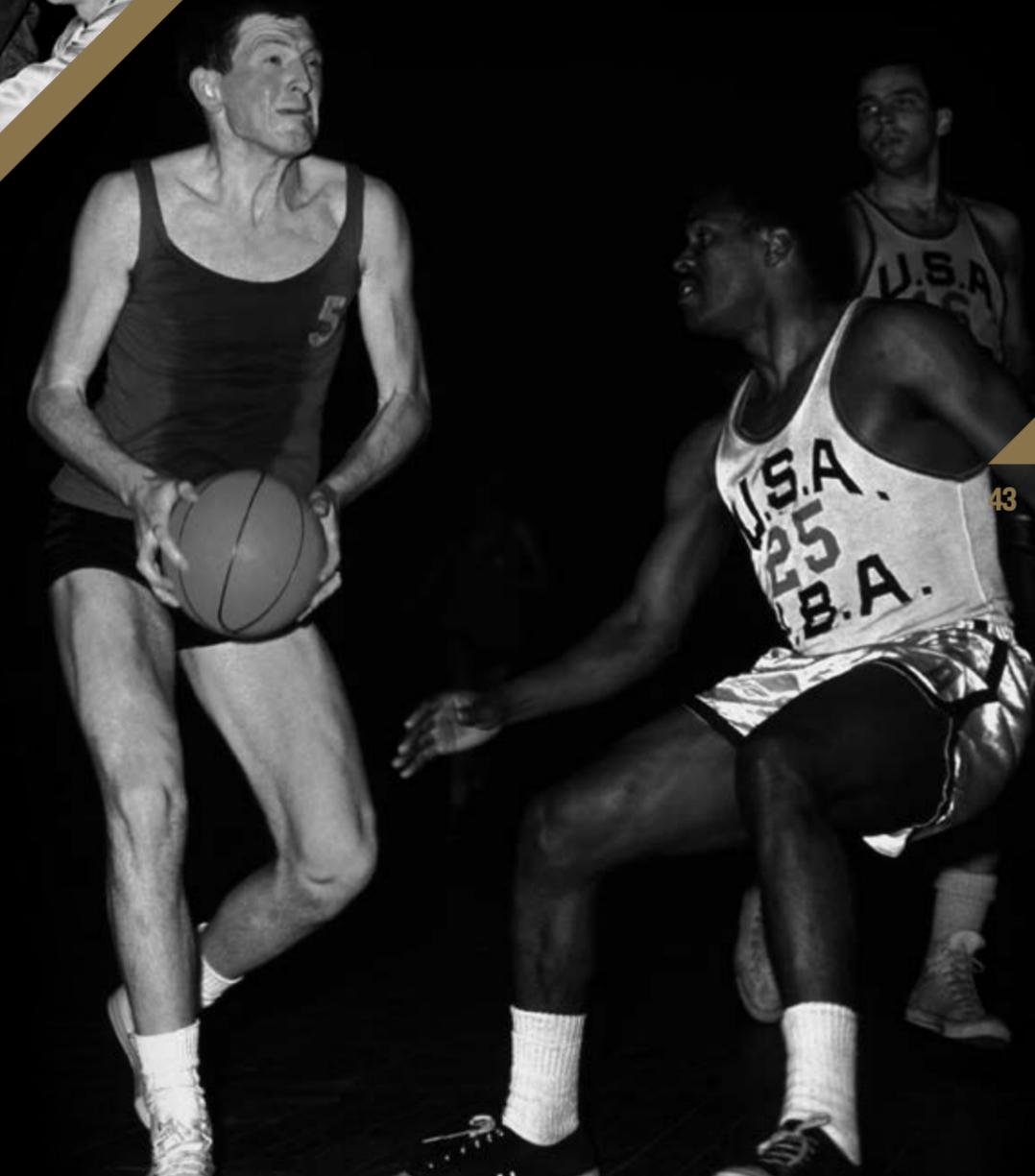
Philippines and a passion for basketball go hand-in-hand, with their first landmark success coming as hosts of the inaugural edition of FIBA Asia Cup in 1960. The tournament included seven teams: Formosa (Chinese Taipei), Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia and the hosts – all initially playing each other in a round robin format. Philippines rolled to the title at the Rizai Memorial Coliseum in Manila by collecting nine wins in nine games. Their six Preliminary Round wins were huge and the closest game in the Final Round was a 12-point victory over Japan. Carlos Badion took home the MVP award. Formosa took second place with just two losses to the Philippines and Japan were third. The 1960 title was the beginning of early Asian dominance by the Philippines, who also won in 1963 and 1967. Their next titles then came later in 1973 and 1986.



18.

THE BIG O, WEST AND LUCAS LEAD USA TO GOLD AT 1960 ROME OLYMPICS

The 1960 Olympics in Rome was not short of star power and not least a USA team that posted another unbeaten campaign to take gold. For the first time, the roster was mainly college based, with the likes of Jerry West, Oscar Robertson, Jerry Lucas, Walt Bellamy, Terry Dischinger and Adrian Smith taking part. The roster was so impressive it was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame. Robertson and Lucas with 17 points per game, and West with 13.8 per outing, led the way. Only the Soviet Union, who picked up silver, got remotely close. They had the towering presence of Janis Krumins, but eventually lost 81-57. Reigning World Champions Brazil landed bronze, with Amaury Pasos and Wlamir Marques again the team leaders. There was also great excitement around the revered Radivoje Korac of Yugoslavia, who was the tournament's leading scorer with 23.6 points per game.



19.

WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL LIGHTS UP THE PARALYMPIC GAMES AND FIBA RECOGNIZES IWBF

The growth of wheelchair basketball has been very significant and its inclusion at the inaugural 1960 Paralympic Games in Rome was a catalyst. It involved 400 Paralympic athletes from 23 countries, competing in 57 medal events across eight sports. Wheelchair basketball appeared at every subsequent edition, with the Women's Tournament introduced in 1968. Meanwhile, a beneficial working relationship was established in 1992 by the then IWBF President Sir Philip Craven MBE and the former FIBA Secretary General Borislav Stankovic, following the creation of what was an independent Wheelchair Basketball Federation. Following this in 1998 the FIBA World Congress recognized the International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF) who now works to support over 95 National Organizations for Wheelchair Basketball (NOWBs) worldwide. All of these events have been pivotal in laying the way for FIBA and the IWBF to strengthen their relationship, with the common goal of developing and growing basketball across the world.



20.

EGYPT CLAIM TITLE IN UNION WITH SYRIA AT FIRST FIBA AFROBASKET

Egypt has a storied legacy in African basketball and hosted the first FIBA AfroBasket during 1962 in tandem with Syria as part of the 1958 political union which formed the United Arab Republic. But they had already played at four FIBA EuroBasket tournaments before that - including winning silverware on home soil in 1949. That had followed bronze in 1947, with their last European appearance coming in 1953. Ethiopia, Guinea, Morocco, Sudan and United Arab Republic all took part in the first FIBA AfroBasket in 1962. United Arab Republic dominated and won every game to be crowned inaugural champions. Sudan claimed silver with a single loss, while Morocco claimed the third spot on the podium. United Arab Republic went on to play at two more editions, winning the title in 1964 and 1970. Egypt started competing alone again in 1972.



21.

BRAZIL MAKE HISTORY IN 1963 BY TAKING SECOND FIBA BASKETBALL WORLD CUP CROWN

Brazil became the first team to capture the FIBA Basketball World Cup for a second time when it hosted the tournament in 1963. The event was scheduled for December 1962 in the Philippines, but was cancelled due to various political difficulties. 13 teams took part in Rio, a relative shock coming when USA lost three of their six games in the Final Round, losing 75-73 to Yugoslavia and 75-74 to USSR, before falling to Brazil 85-81. The host nation had already won key battles against Yugoslavia 90-71 and USSR 90-79. Brazil had a mean one-two punch with tournament MVP Wlamir Marques, who averaged 18 points per game, and 1959 MVP Amaury Pasos, who poured in 17.7 points per outing. Meanwhile, Yugoslavia's 69-67 last day victory over the USSR earned a silver and their opponents bronze. The legendary Radivoje Korac led Yugoslavia with 16.4 points per game. The medals would be the first of many World Cup achievements for both countries.



22.

EASTERN EUROPE BECOMES POWER BASE AS USA DODGES PODIUM

A new order was confirmed for global female hoops at the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 1964 in Peru. Eastern Europe was rubber-stamped as the new power base, with the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria picking up medals in a repeat of 1959. With USA having missed Moscow, it was assumed the two-time winners would retake their crown. But they failed to impress and missed the podium completely. A dominant and undefeated Soviet Union retained their title with Ravila Samilova and Skaidrite Smildzinia-Budovska impressing again. Czechoslovakia only lost once while taking silver and Bulgaria secured bronze thanks to 16 points per game from Niza Borisova. Japan competed for the first time, with Korea having previously been the only entrant from Asia.



23.

FIBA 'ALL-STAR' TEAM CONCEPT STARTED IN 1964

FIBA 'All-Star' teams played exhibition games for decades to help promote the sport, with the first appearance coming in 1964. Following the idea of FIBA Secretary General William Jones, it was decided the European Cup of Champions winners would take on an All-Star league team. Real Madrid hosted and lost 91-87 to the league select team. The event was a success and named the European Basketball Festival. From 1969, the All-Star team included players from across Europe, not just the league. That same year, the All-Stars played the Yugoslavia national team to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Yugoslav Federation. An event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Italian Federation followed. In 1972, the 40th birthday of FIBA witnessed the European All-Stars facing the USA national team across four games. The same matchup happened in 1982, with a young Michael Jordan representing USA. The "FIBA EuroStars" replaced the Festival in 1996 and was similar to the NBA All-Star Game concept. The event lasted for four years.



24.

IGNIS VARESE DOWN CORINTHIANS TO WIN FIRST OFFICIAL INTERCONTINENTAL CUP IN 1966

The aim of the FIBA Intercontinental Cup has always been to bring winning clubs from different continents together to compete for a prestigious title. The first official edition followed a 1965 test game between S.C. Corinthians and Real Madrid in front of 10,000 fans in Sao Paulo. That Corinthians team had Brazilian legend Wlamir Marques, the MVP of the FIBA Basketball World Cup in 1963. He netted 51 points in his team's 118-109 triumph. Real Madrid hosted the first official event a year later to inaugurate their new Pabellon de la Ciudad Deportiva stadium. Ignis Pallacanestro Varese spoiled the party, beating the hosts 86-77 in the Semi-Finals to create a title showdown with Corinthians. Some 5,000 spectators saw Varese win 66-59, with Italian national team star Giovanni Gavagnin pouring in 20 points. Meanwhile, Madrid's legendary coach Lolo Sainz played at the event and helped his team take third place.



25.

TIDE TURNED AS EUROPEAN TEAMS FINISHED FIRST AND SECOND AT 1967 FIBA BASKETBALL WORLD CUP

The fifth edition of the FIBA Basketball World Cup in 1967 in Uruguay witnessed history with a first champion from outside the Americas. Led by Modestas Paulauskas and legendary coach Alexander Gomelsky, the Soviet Union won eight of nine games to take gold. The tournament started with three groups of four teams, with the top two advancing to the Final Round. In that last phase, USA edged the Soviets 59-58 to hand them their only loss. It wasn't enough to deny Soviet Union their title, thanks mainly to almost 14 points per game from Paulauskas. There was also a significant prize awarded to the Soviet Union, who lifted the first version of the famous Naismith Trophy. Yugoslavia claimed head-to-head advantages over the USA and Brazil to take silver, with Ivo Daneu crowned MVP. Brazil lost to the Soviets and Yugoslavia but rallied with three straight wins for a fourth consecutive podium spot.



26.

KOREA FLIES THE FLAG FOR ASIA WITH SURPRISE FINAL APPEARANCE IN PRAGUE

It may have taken five editions for a team from Asia to medal at the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup, but history in 1967 was worth the wait for Korea. Their success was largely due to legendary FIBA Hall of Fame member Shin-Ja Park being at her peak. Crowned MVP and going on to become the most outstanding player in Asia for more than a decade, her 19.2 points per game return was superb. Undersized for a center, but with so many post moves, she was a real handful. Her 16 points against bronze medalists Czechoslovakia in an intense 67-66 win was vital. The biggest shock was USA winning just one of their six games. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union marched unbeaten to their third straight title.



27.

USA STAY PERFECT WITH SEVENTH STRAIGHT OLYMPIC GOLD AMID PROTESTS AND A CULTURAL REVOLUTION

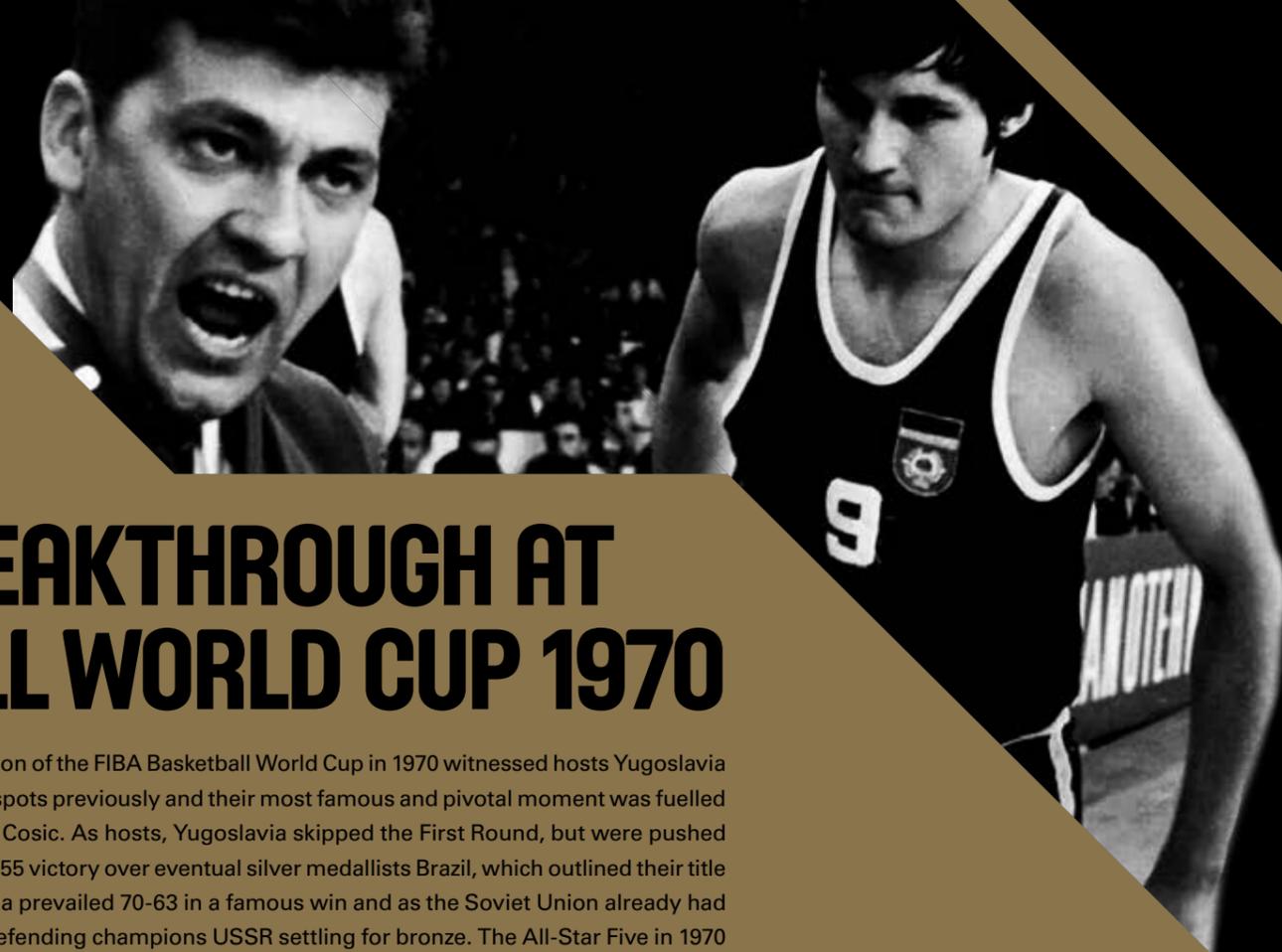
The USA shrugged off their supposed "underdog" tag at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City to win yet another title and claim their seventh straight gold medal. The Games took place against a backdrop of global socio-political troubles, including student uprisings, strikes, the Vietnam War, the Cultural Revolution in China, demands for civil rights and the fight against Apartheid. The USA themselves had Lew Alcindor, who later changed his name to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, boycotting the Games as a protest at the treatment of African Americans in the US. Still, USA disproved their critics, easing to the Semi-Finals and beating Brazil 75-63, although a much-anticipated USA and Soviet Union Final didn't materialize. Yugoslavia shocked the Soviets 63-62 in one of the biggest upsets in Olympic history. In the Final, USA claimed a 65-50 victory as Spencer Haywood starred with 21 points. The Soviet Union bounced back to take bronze after beating Brazil 70-53. The event witnessed many future FIBA Hall of Fame ballers including Kresimir Cosic, Radivoj Korac and Ivo Daneu of Yugoslavia, plus Soviet Union duo Sergei Belov and Modestas Paulauskas.



28.

YUGOSLAVIA BREAKTHROUGH AT FIBA BASKETBALL WORLD CUP 1970

Staged outside of South America for the first time, the sixth edition of the FIBA Basketball World Cup in 1970 witnessed hosts Yugoslavia land a maiden title. It was third time lucky after two runners-up spots previously and their most famous and pivotal moment was fuelled by more than 17 points per game from the legendary Kresimir Cosic. As hosts, Yugoslavia skipped the First Round, but were pushed close by Italy 66-63 in their first game. Then came a stunning 80-55 victory over eventual silver medallists Brazil, which outlined their title potential. The biggest hurdle on paper was USA, but Yugoslavia prevailed 70-63 in a famous win and as the Soviet Union already had two losses, the host nation was guaranteed the title, with the defending champions USSR settling for bronze. The All-Star Five in 1970 was also a seriously special one. It included Yugoslavia's driving force Cosic, Sergei Belov and Soviet teammate Modestas Paulauskas, Ubiratan Pereira Maciel of Brazil and Kenny Washington of USA.



29.

AUSTRALIA KINGS OF OCEANIA CHAMPIONSHIP FROM DAY ONE

Australia and New Zealand have long dominated basketball in Oceania since its inception in 1971. The first FIBA Oceania Championship served as an Olympic Men's Basketball Tournament Qualifier and Australia eased to a 91-56 win against the Tall Blacks, en-route to completing a 3-0 series sweep. The competition took place every two years to determine Oceania's representative in either the FIBA Basketball World Cup or the Olympics. Occasionally other nations have participated - Tahiti (1987), Samoa (1993), American Samoa (1995), New Caledonia (1997) and Guam (1999). The Boomers have collected 43 victories from 47 meetings with the Tall Blacks, while New Zealand's most famous series win was in 2001 which resulted in Australia missing the 2002 FIBA Basketball World Cup. New Zealand defeated Guam in 1999 in a one-game playoff as Australia did not compete due to their position as hosts of the 2000 Olympic Games.



30.

CAF CLUB RED STAR LIFTS FIRST AFRICAN CHAMPIONS CUP

Central African Republic (CAF) club Red Star made history in 1972 when they were crowned first winners of the African Champions Cup, beating Stade Malien of Mali 71-68. Another CAF club, Hit Tresor, won in 1973 and 1975, with Senegalese side AS Forces Armées capturing the 1974 edition. They also won in 1979 and 1981, while AS Police gave Senegal more prestige in 1983. The competition started taking place annually in 2004, by which time Angolan powerhouse Primeiro de Agosto were about to dominate. Winning in 2002 and 2004, they swept between 2007 and 2010, plus in 2012 and 2013 – thanks mainly to national team players like Olimpio Cipriano, Joaquim Gomes, Carlos Almeida and Miguel Lutonda. Other Angolan clubs Petro Atletico were champions in 2006 and 2015, plus Recreativo do Libolo in 2014. Étoile Sportif Sahel from Tunisia won in 2011, while Morocco's AS Salé reigned supreme in 2017, prior to it becoming the FIBA Africa Basketball League. Primeiro de Agosto claimed the last title in 2019 when it was subsequently replaced by the Basketball Africa League (BAL).



31.

GARCIA SPARKS 1971 HOME PARTY IN SAO PAULO, WHILE BRAZIL ALSO PLAY HOSTS IN 1983

There were street parties in Sao Paulo during 1971 as locals celebrated Brazil's first FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup medal, while the success helped them host in 1983 too. The centrepiece of a historic chapter was fan favorite Nilza Garcia, who had showed her class as the tournament's top scorer in 1967. Even if Brazil didn't snap the dominance of champions Soviet Union or consistency of finalist Czechoslovakia, taking a first medal was pivotal. The other big story from Sao Paulo was Africa finally participating at the flagship event as Madagascar took to the floor. Brazil hosted again in 1983, but had to settle for fifth place despite a dazzling 29 points per game from Hortencia Marcari. The Soviet Union posted a 10-0 record, beating USA 84-82 in a classic Final for a sixth title in seven editions, while China took a maiden medal with bronze.



32.

THE DAY USSR STUNNED AMERICA WITH ITS FIRST OLYMPIC BASKETBALL GOLD

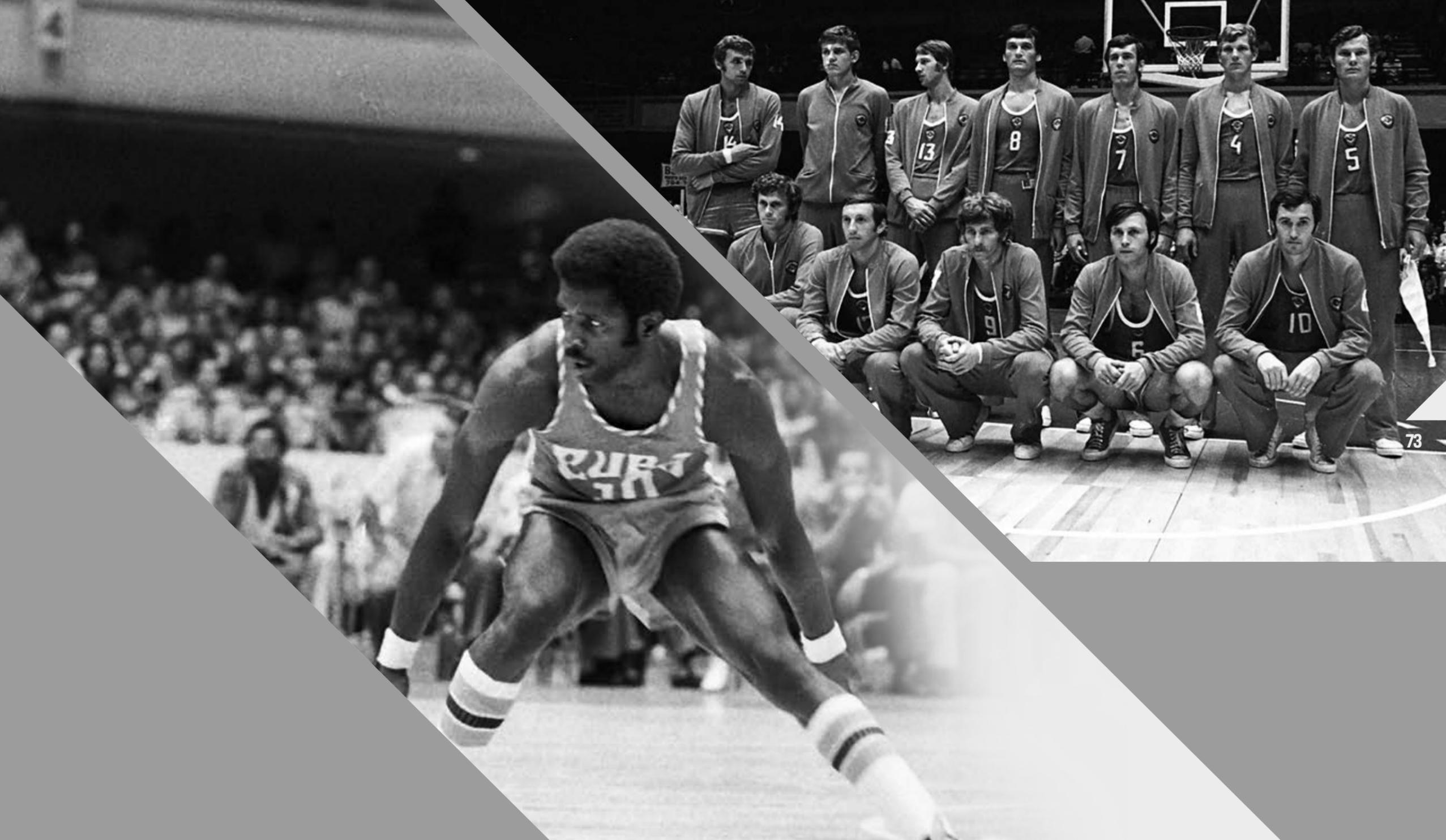
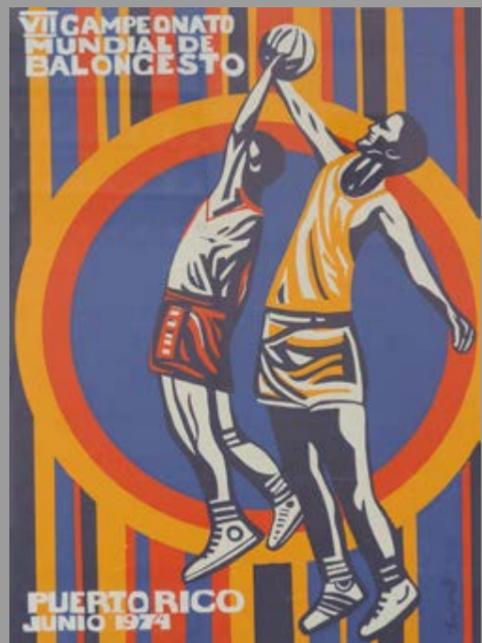
The USA's unbeaten Olympic streak of seven straight gold medals ended when the Soviet Union beat them 51-50 in a controversial Final at the 1972 Munich Games. With just three seconds remaining, USA made two free-throws to move ahead by a point. But when the Soviets inbounded and missed, a referee had whistled for play to stop with a second remaining after noting an issue at the scorer's table. The Soviets successfully argued they had called a timeout before the USA's free-throws and three seconds were put back on the clock. It was still being reset when the referees put the ball in play, and the Soviets missed again. As USA players celebrated, FIBA Secretary General William Jones stepped in and ordered the clock to again be reset to three seconds. This time Alexander Belov made a game-winning and historic basket for the Soviet Union. The USA had a protest denied and voted unanimously to refuse their silver medals. To this day, they still haven't accepted them.



33.

SOVIET UNION RETURN TO TOP OF PODIUM AT 1974 BASKETBALL WORLD CUP

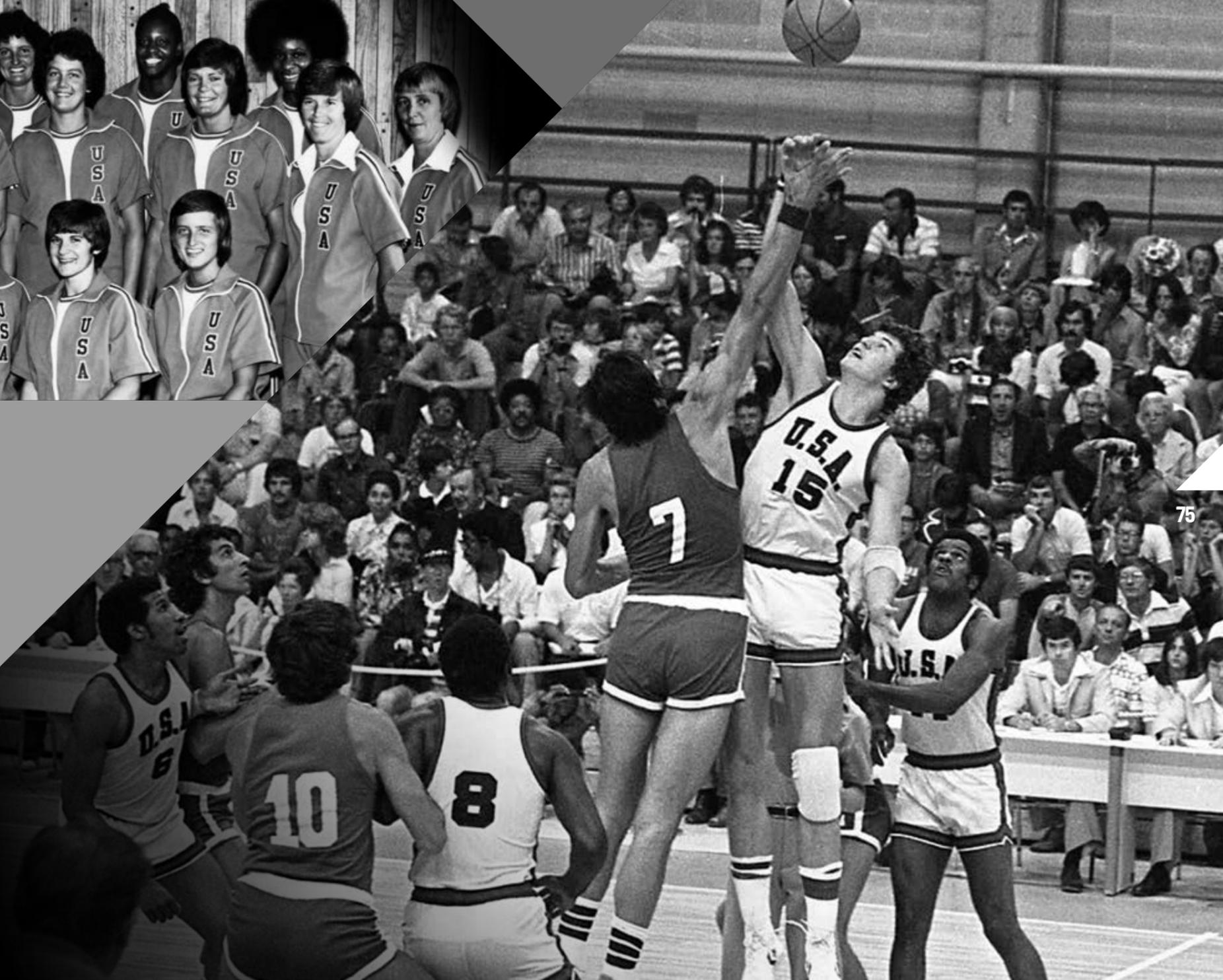
The FIBA Basketball World Cup returned to the Americas in 1974 and for the second time, the Soviet Union won the title. Puerto Rico hosted and went directly to the Final Round along with defending champions Yugoslavia, as other nations fought to make the last phase. One of the Soviet Union's victories was a 140-48 win over Central African Republic – a record margin in the competition. The eventual spots on the podium were ultimately determined by the Soviet Union's last day showdown with the unbeaten USA. While Soviet Union had already fallen to Yugoslavia 82-79 in the Final Round, they made amends with a 105-94 success over the Americans. The Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and USA were all locked with 6-1 records, but basket difference meant the podium finished in that same order. Alexandre Salnikov was vital throughout the competition and led the Soviet team by averaging 17.6 points per game.



34.

WOMEN JOIN THE MEN IN MONTREAL TO TAKE FIRST OLYMPIC STEPS IN 1976

As the men racked up a ninth Olympic edition, women's basketball finally debuted at the Games, after FIBA had agreed with the International Olympic Committee to reduce the number of men's teams from 16 to 12 in order to make way for the women. Soviet Union, USA, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Japan and hosts Canada all participated for a total of 6 teams. Unstoppable FIBA Hall of Famer Uljana Semjonova led the undefeated Soviet Union to gold. Pat Summitt, Lusie Harris, Ann Myers and Nancy Lieberman helped USA to silver, with brilliant FIBA Hall of Fame entrant Penka Stoyanova inspiring a bronze for Bulgaria. A flawless USA men's team made it 8 Olympic golds in 9 editions. Adrian Dantley dropped 30 points in a 95-75 title win against first time finalists Yugoslavia. Defending 1972 champions Soviet Union occupied the third podium step.



35.

FIBA'S SECOND SECRETARY GENERAL BORISLAV STANKOVIC ALTERED COURSE OF INTERNATIONAL BASKETBALL

The second FIBA Secretary General, Borislav Stankovic, is a colossus of basketball history serving in the role for 26 years. Stankovic had a veterinary medicine background, but also loved the game, playing for Crvena Zvezda, Zveznicar Beograd and Partizan. He represented Yugoslavia at the inaugural FIBA Basketball World Cup in 1950. Stankovic then coached OKK Belgrade to four Yugoslavian titles and was the first foreigner to win the Italian title when at Cantu in 1968. His impact as Secretary General was monumental. Former NBA Commissioner David Stern once explained "No one has contributed to the globalization of basketball more than my friend Bora Stankovic." Stankovic was certainly unwavering in getting the best players competing at the Olympics to elevate the sport via unprecedented exposure. Under his leadership, the FIBA Congress dropped the word 'Amateur' from its name in 1989 - effectively facilitating the USA 'Dream Team' at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games. "Millions of children all over the world watching all that basketball talent on the court were inspired to bounce the ball on the floor, rather than kick it," he enthused afterwards. When Stankovic passed away in 2020 at the age of 94, the deluge of tributes from around the globe underlined his status as a true giant of basketball.



36.

UNBEATEN YUGOSLAVIA DO 1978 DOUBLE ON SOVIET UNION TO CLAIM SECOND WORLD TITLE

Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union were among the elite in international basketball before the FIBA Basketball World Cup 1978 tipped off in the Philippines. Yugoslavia underlined their status with another title, adding to their 1970 success. This edition had a new format, with defending champions Soviet Union and the hosts going directly to the Semi-Final Round. Yugoslavia won all seven games in the Semi-Final Round, including beating the USA 100-93, but they had narrow squeaks against Germany and Australia. Ahead of the title game, Yugoslavia had handed the Soviets their only defeat earlier in the competition. The Final was much closer as they won a classic 82-81 as MVP Drazen Dalipagic netted 21 points. The footnote was that Yugoslavia were back on top of the world, but the competition was getting stronger and stronger.



37.

WORTHY, PERKINS CARRY USA TO FIRST U19 WORLD TITLE

Before their Championship with North Carolina and long successful NBA careers, James Worthy and Sam Perkins helped an undefeated USA team land the first FIBA U19 Basketball World Cup title in 1979. Originally the FIBA World Championship for Junior Men, the last game of the final round group phase saw USA facing hosts Brazil in what was effectively a Championship game. An amazing crowd of around 11,000 watched USA win 75-55, with Eric 'Sleepy' Floyd and Worthy scoring 17 and 12 points respectively. Argentina defeated Italy 71-70 to take third place. The competition was subsequently held every four years from 1979 to 2007, then every two years. USA won three of the first four events and by 2021, had captured eight World Cup titles in 15 editions. Yugoslavia famously won in 1987 with a team packed full of legends like Toni Kukoc, Vlade Divac and Dino Radja. Meanwhile, an RJ Barrett-led Canada beat USA in the Semi-Finals en route to the title in 2017 and is one of the country's biggest results in its basketball history.



38.

PUERTO RICO HOST AND WIN FIRST FIBA AMERICUP

Puerto Rico enjoyed being hosts of the inaugural edition of the FIBA AmeriCup in 1980 - then known as the Tournament of the Americas. Also including Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Mexico and Uruguay, the teams faced each other in pool play, with the standings deciding the medals. Puerto Rico relied on Angelo Cruz, Neftali Rivera, Ruben Rodriguez and Georgie Torres to finish 5-1, the same as Canada. But beating Canada 84-67 gave them the head to head – and gold. Argentina took third thanks to their 118-98 victory over Brazil who finished fourth. Meanwhile Puerto Rico, Canada and Argentina also qualified for the 1980 Olympics in Moscow, but ultimately boycotted the event. Puerto Rico's 1980 success was the first of three titles, also winning in 1989 and 1995. USA has a record seven golds, Brazil has four and Argentina two – although they also have the most podium finishes with 13. The FIBA AmeriCup was played every two years between 1993 and 2017 before becoming quadrennial.



39.

BAYI ROCKERS WIN FIRST FIBA ASIA CHAMPIONS CUP PRIOR TO WEST ASIAN DOMINANCE

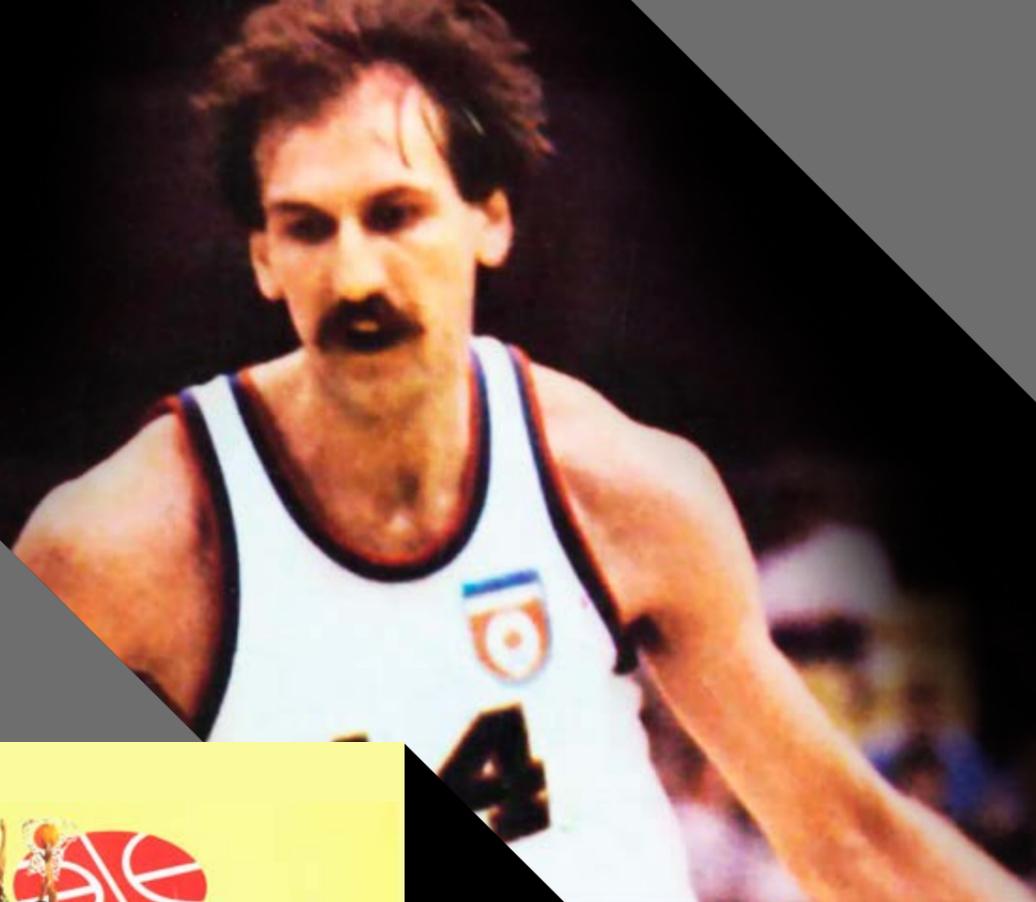
It was 1981 in Hong Kong when Bayi Rockets of China had the honor of taking the iconic inaugural FIBA Asia Champions Cup. Eight clubs participated in the first edition of the competition - then known as the Asian Basketball Confederations Champions Cup. Bayi were joined by Nippon Kokan of Japan, Philippines side Apcor, Industry Bank of Korea, Kwan On of Hong Kong, Singapore's SIA, PKN Selangor of Malaysia and Ohod of Saudi Arabia. Bayi and Nippon were both undefeated going into the final day of action and the Chinese side won 98-53. The second edition in 1984 saw Northern Cement of Philippines winning the title and in 1988, Filipino side Swift-PABL also lifted silverware. The competition was also played in 1990 and 1992 before shifting to annually in 1993. Sagesse of Lebanon have a record three crowns, while four clubs have two titles - Al-Rayyan of Qatar, Al-Riyadi Beirut of Lebanon and Iranian duo Mahram Tehran and Saba Battery Tehran.



40.

SOVIETS EDGE USA IN EXCITING 1982 WORLD CUP CLIMAX

Colombia hosted the FIBA Basketball World Cup in 1982 and once again, the pre-tournament talk was about the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. Combining to win the previous four world titles, both nations were locked and loaded, but USA had a competitive team with future NBA ballers – most notably Doc Rivers. Meanwhile, Spain had Juan Antonio San Epifanio, aka 'Epi', and Soviet Union had the teenage sensation, Arvydas Sabonis. Spain hit the headlines early when 28 points from the electrifying Epi inspired a 109-99 victory over USA. Then in the Semi-Final Round, everyone sat up and took notice of USA's 88-81 triumph over Yugoslavia. It ultimately came down to the USA playing the Soviet Union in the Final, with the latter pipping their great rivals 95-94 in a classic title matchup. Rivers had a buzzer beater to win it, but it was off target and the Soviet Union celebrated a third title in five editions. Yugoslavia and Spain also went to the wire as the former won 119-117, to take third.



41.

FIBA'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY: WHEN YOUNG MICHAEL JORDAN SHINED

FIBA celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1982 and a huge highlight was the exhibition games between the best players in Europe and a USA team with a young Michael Jordan. The European All Stars had future Hall of Famers Drazen Dalipagic, Vladimir Tkachenko, Pierluigi Marzorati, Juan Antonio San Epifanio, Miki Berkovich and Stanislav Kropilak. The young College-based USA team had eight NBA ballers in waiting, including Jordan. The Europeans won 111-92 in Geneva, with Jordan netting 20 points. Then 48 hours later in Budapest, Europe prevailed 103-88 as Dragan Dalipagic tallied 21 points and Jordan scored 19 in front of 9,000 fans. The USA team then played a dramatic series against the Yugoslavia national team. They won a thriller 92-90 in Zadar, lost 93-92 in Zagreb, then won the decider 88-83 in front of 5,000 fans in Belgrade. The 50th anniversary celebrations also featured a women's exhibition game with Kim Hwa Soon and Park Chan Soo guiding Korea to a thrilling 87-83 triumph against Brazil. That same Korea team subsequently won a historic silver medal at the 1984 Olympics.



42.

THE BIRTH OF THE THREE-POINT LINE

The first three-point line in a professional context came during 1961 in the American Basketball League which folded after 18 months and the three-pointer along with it. The American Basketball Association launched in 1967 with the three-pointer and eventually merged with the NBA nine years later. But it wasn't until 1979 when the NBA adopted downtown shooting. Chris Ford of the Boston Celtics dropped a historic first triple on October 12. Fast forward to the modern day and global superstar Stephen Curry sets the standard with his deep range. Three-pointers are now one of the most popular and integral elements of the sport. Adding the three-point line in 1984, the FIBA perimeter distance was initially set at 6.25 meters (20.5 feet) and as of 2010 at 6.75 meters (22.1 feet) at the radius with no less than 0.9 meters (3.0 feet) from each sideline. The NBA's line is at 23 feet 9 inches (7.24 meters) and no less than 3 feet (0.91 meters) from each sideline.



43.

GEORGI GLOUCHKOV SHINES AS FIRST EUROPEAN IN NBA

There were 109 international players from 39 countries when the NBA 2021-22 season tipped off – some 37 years after trailblazer Georgi Glouchkov became the first Eastern European player in the competition. "The Banger of the Balkans" was one American news headline in 1985 when he played his first game with the Phoenix Suns. The Bulgarian power forward paved the way for so many more Europeans to follow him. He first appeared on the wider radar at EuroBasket in 1979 and became a household name in his homeland and beyond. At EuroBasket 1985, he was spotted by scouts of the Phoenix Suns and invited to a preparation camp. Then offered a contract, it wasn't easy for players from communist countries to move abroad and he needed special permission from the government and the military to get to the NBA. After one season with the Suns, he returned to Europe to play at Caserta in Italy alongside the legendary Oscar Schmidt. Since 2010, Glouchkov has been President of the Bulgarian Basketball Federation.



44.

USA CLAIM SECOND TITLE AT '86 WORLD CUP IN SPAIN

The FIBA Basketball World Cup 1986 in Spain saw an increase from 13 to 24 teams, as well as being staged in Western Europe for the first time. The USA went undefeated to avenge their 1982 Final defeat to the Soviet Union. 1992 Barcelona 'Dream Team' member David Robinson starred, along with Kenny Smith, Steve Kerr, Sean Elliott and Brian Shaw. There were many stars on show, including Soviet Union's phenomenal Arvydas Sabonis, Greek scoring machine Nikos Galis, who netted a tournament high 33.7 points per game, legendary Brazilian Oscar Schmidt, Andrew Gaze of Australia, Yugoslavian duo Drazen Petrovic and Vlade Divac, plus Spain's Epi and Jordi Villacampa, Fernando Romay and Fernando Martin. In an epic Semi-Final, Soviet Union trailed Yugoslavia by 9 points, but three quick triples forced overtime and they won a classic by 91-90, with their opponents eventually taking bronze. The Soviet Union met the USA in the title game again. The United States led by 18, but Sabonis and the hot-shooting Valdemaras Chomicius reduced the gap to one basket inside the last minute. Kenny Smith, aka 'The Jet', then scored the winning basket with 15 seconds remaining as USA won the title for the first time since 1954.



45.

SWEETEST OF USA WINS AS FIBA HALL OF FAME TRIO GET IT DONE

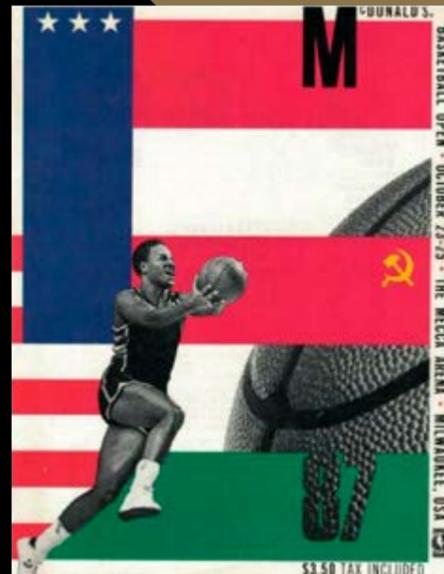
As one of basketball's greatest historic rivalries, it could not have tasted any sweeter for USA when they won the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 1986 title in the Soviet Union. At the previous edition, the Soviet Union had captured a sixth title by beating USA in the Final. The 1986 edition was another chapter in a "basketball space race" for superiority and with home advantage, many had expected Soviet Union to defend their title. But the USA had other ideas and amassed a tremendous unbeaten 7-0 record and gold medal. They produced one of their most impressive ever performances in the Final with a super 108-88 success, as five players reached double-digits. USA had three FIBA Hall of Fame members, including Cheryl Miller, who led the way with 23 points, alongside Teresa Edwards and Anne Donovan. Meanwhile, Canada took their second bronze medal in three editions, with Bev Smith sensational again.



46.

BASKETBALL TAKES BIG LEAP WITH FIRST MCDONALD'S OPEN

The first McDonald's Open in 1987 was staged in Milwaukee, with the three-day competition helping to unify the basketball world. It involved the Bucks, European club champions Tracer Milano and the Soviet Union national team. The NBA side beat the Soviets 127-100 in the title decider. FIBA Secretary General Borislav Stankovic and NBA Commissioner David Stern felt having the best players in the world playing against each other at the event would showcase the sport like never before. The event was pivotal in FIBA Congress later deciding to drop "Amateur" from its name, facilitating NBA stars playing Olympic Basketball and the 1992 USA "Dream Team". That original McDonald's Open had Soviet Union stars Sarunas Marciulionis, Alexander Volkov and Valeri Tikhonenko – their class highlighted by being crowned Olympic champions a year later. There were eight more McDonald's Opens that captivated audiences. MVP's included the likes of Michael Jordan, Patrick Ewing, Charles Barkley and Larry Bird. The McDonald's Open events also accelerated international stars playing Stateside and lighting up the NBA – something that has grown and grown over the years.



47.

FIBA WORLD CONGRESS IN 1989
 PAVES WAY FOR USA DREAM TEAM
 AT 1992 OLYMPICS



Basketball fans will forever remember the USA 'Dream Team', but it was the historic decision at the FIBA Extraordinary World Congress in 1989 that paved the way for the NBA stars to play. Professional players had not been allowed to play in FIBA events, with USA represented by high school and college players. Several years earlier, FIBA Secretary General Boris Stankovic stated: "It is nonsense to have 200 million players in the world as FIBA members but not the 300 best players. Today it is a fact the U.S. professionals are much stronger, but only by playing with stronger teams can the rest of the world improve." At the FIBA World Congress on April 8, 1989, the body voted to drop 'Amateur' from its name, going from the Fédération Internationale de Basketball Amateur to the Fédération Internationale de Basketball - but retaining the FIBA acronym. "We see this as our triumphant entry into the 21st century," stated Stankovic afterwards. The impact was immeasurable. The 'Dream Team' with Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson, Larry Bird and Co at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics captured an army of new basketball fans.

CONGRESS · MUNICH 1989



48.

LEGENDARY FIBA HALL OF FAMER ULJANA SEMJONOVA HANGS UP HER GAME SHOES

Few if any ballers have left a women's basketball legacy quite like the one Semjonova did when the curtain fell on her career in 1989. Through the 1970's and 1980's, the 2.13m tall Latvian never lost a game in international competition while playing for the Soviet Union between 1968 to 1986. Semjonova was a double Olympic winner with the Soviet Union and had a double-double of 19.4 points and 12.4 rebounds per game at the 1976 Olympics when women's hoops debuted. Winning gold again at the 1980 Moscow Olympics, it was a similar story at the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup with titles in 1971, 1975 and 1983. She also took the Soviet Union to 10 successive gold medals at the FIBA Women's EuroBasket between 1968 and 1985. Unstoppable in club basketball, Semjonova won the equivalent of the modern day EuroLeague Women title 11 times. Semjonova was enshrined into the FIBA Hall of Fame in 2007, having been the first non-US entry into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame in 1993.



49.

FIBA'S FINAL FOUR CONCEPT FOR EUROPEAN CLUB COMPETITIONS PROVES A GAME-CHANGER

The decision to implement a Final Four at the 1988 FIBA European Champions Cup in Belgium was truly an iconic FIBA moment. Something evidenced by this popular innovation still being in place some 34 years later and utilized by other sports. The organization had previously flirted with the concept in 1966, but it was in 1988 when the idea was truly embraced to become part of the very fabric of all major FIBA European club competitions. In front of 9,000 fans at the Flanders Expo in Ghent, this landmark event delivered the kind of epic season finale that we have seen for so many Final Fours at men's and women's events down the years. Tracer Milano beat Aris 87-82 in the Semi-Finals and Maccabi Elite Tel Aviv won by the same score against Partizan. The Final was intense too, with Tracer Milano winning their third title in the competition by beating Maccabi 90-84. Since then, both the men's and women's competitions have been able to celebrate everyone's love for Final Four. With players, coaches and fans all focused on making it to the big show and then fighting it out for silverware under one roof across one weekend.



50.

AGREEMENT ALLOWS NBA PLAYERS TO COMPETE AT FIBA EVENTS

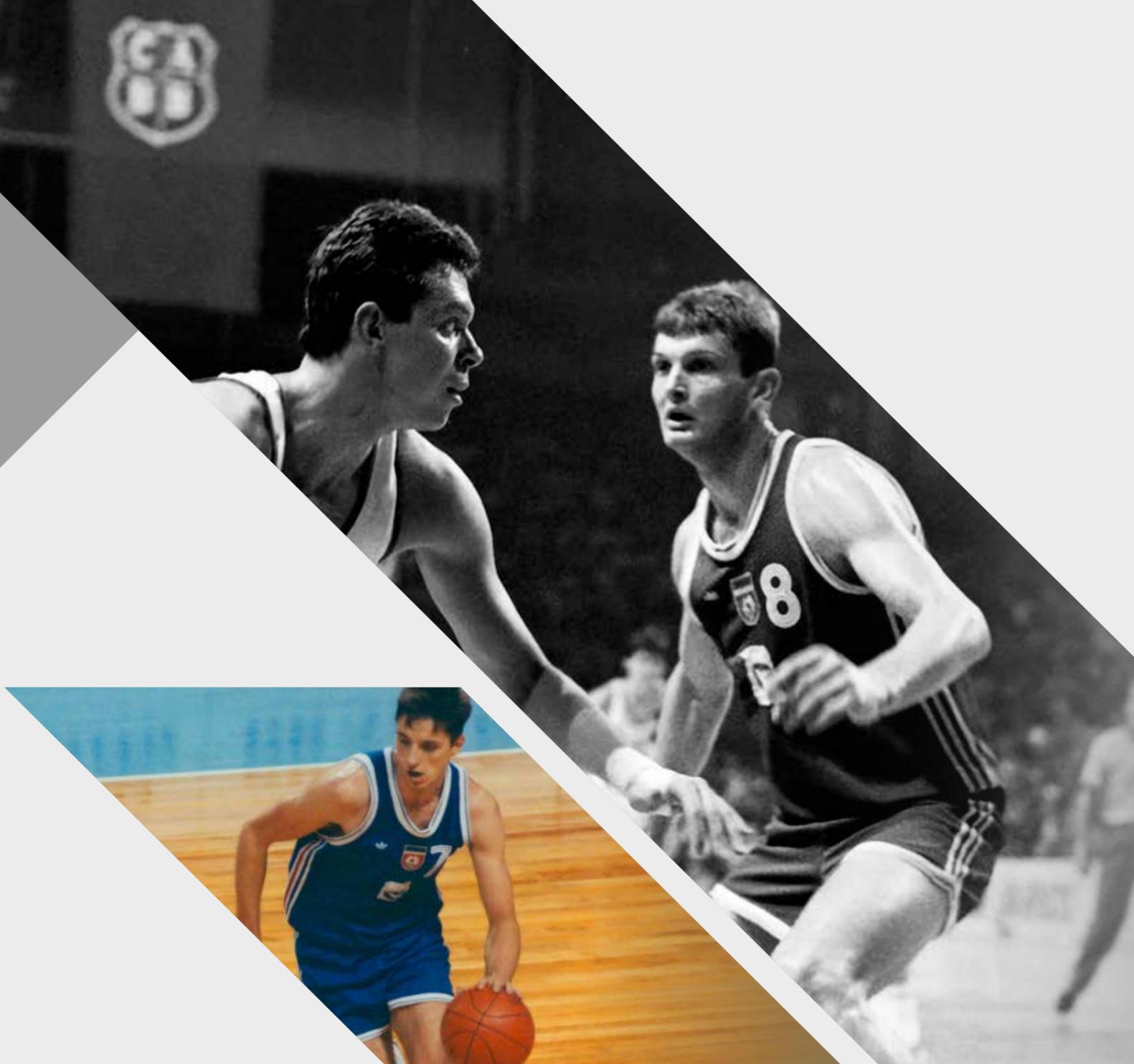
May 9, 1990 will forever be a key landmark in the history of international basketball as it was the date FIBA and the NBA signed an agreement to allow NBA players to appear at FIBA events. It came out of a proposal for open play for professionals which was approved at the Extraordinary FIBA World Congress on April 8, 1989. "When the agreement was signed on May 9, 1990 by (then FIBA Secretary General) Borislav Stankovic and (then NBA Commissioner) David Stern, FIBA and the NBA put in place the most important protocol in the history of basketball after the rules written by James Naismith," declared the late FIBA Secretary General and IOC member Patrick Baumann in 2010. The first NBA players to appear in a FIBA event were Vlade Divac and Drazen Petrovic, who played for Yugoslavia at the FIBA Basketball World Cup in 1990, while Alexander Volkov also competed for the Soviet Union. The agreement also facilitated the USA Dream Team's 1992 Olympics appearance.



51.

PETROVIC, KUKOC FIRE YUGOSLAVIA TO GLORY AT FIBA BASKETBALL WORLD CUP 1990 IN ARGENTINA

The FIBA Basketball World Cup 1990 returned to its roots in Argentina, the country that staged the first edition 40 years earlier. Yugoslavia were crowned kings of the world for a third time as Drazen Petrovic and Toni Kukoc averaged a combined 34.9 points per game. In the Semi-Finals, Alonzo Mourning had 28 points and 11 rebounds for USA, but they were dethroned by the brilliance of Petrovic and Kukoc. The duo harvested a combined 50 points as Yugoslavia won 99-91. Yugoslavia romped to a 92-75 Final victory against the Soviet Union. It was a big team effort with five players posting double-digit scoring returns. USA battled back against Puerto Rico to win the Third-Place Game in a classic 107-105 encounter. There were several FIBA Hall of Fame ballers on show in Buenos Aires, including Brazil legend Oscar Schmidt, who led the tournament in scoring at 34.6 points per game.



52.

USA RETAIN TITLE BUT 1990 EYES ON PODIUM NEWCOMERS YUGOSLAVIA AND CUBA

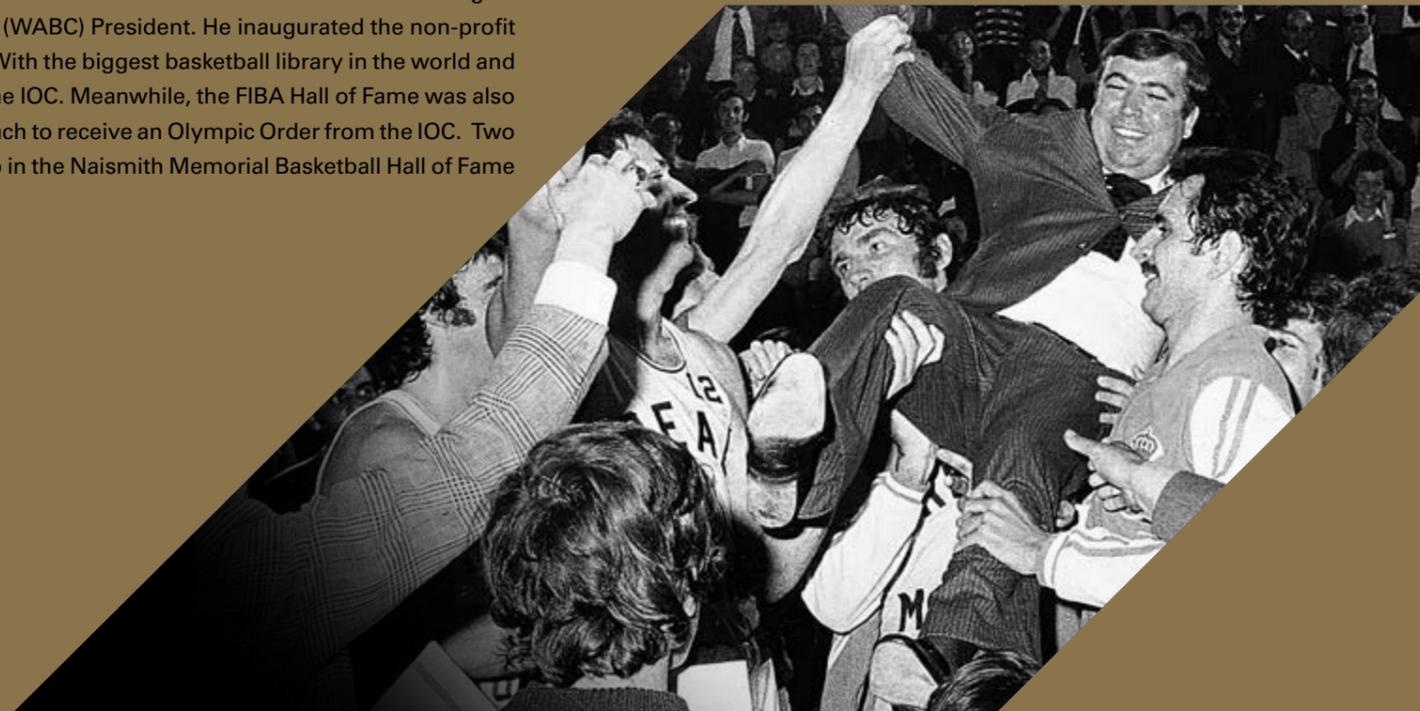
This was a rare FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup edition that saw a podium with two medal debutantes. The 1990 tournament in Malaysia witnessed both Yugoslavia and Cuba make history, taking silver and bronze medals respectively. USA defended their crown in what was the second of four titles in five editions. They beat Yugoslavia 88-78 in the Final, carried by a combined 40 points from Teresa Edwards and Katrina McClain. The performance of Yugoslavia was exceptional, with Bosnia and Herzegovina legend and FIBA Hall of Fame entrant Razija Mujanovic dropping 23.4 points per game. Cuba took that historic bronze behind the performances of Regla Hernandez Buides and Leonor Borrell. It was also the end of an era as the Soviet Union missed out on the medals for the first time in 37 years and never returned to the competition.



53.

SPANISH LEGEND'S LEGACY LIVES ON STRONG THROUGH PEDRO FERRANDIZ FOUNDATION

Legendary Spanish coach Pedro Ferrandiz will forever be revered for his incredible legacy in the game and for the Pedro Ferrandiz Foundation. Still Real Madrid's winningest coach with 27 of their 93 titles, the Alicante native was co-founder and former World Association of Basketball Coaches (WABC) President. He inaugurated the non-profit Pedro Ferrandiz Foundation in 1991 in Alcobendas, Madrid, in devotion to the study and diffusion of 'basketball culture'. With the biggest basketball library in the world and a museum, its International Documentation and Research Centre was also officially recognized by the likes of FIBA and the IOC. Meanwhile, the FIBA Hall of Fame was also built upon his initiative, with the building an extension of the Foundation. In 1998, Ferrandiz became the first basketball coach to receive an Olympic Order from the IOC. Two years later, he was given the FIBA Order of Merit. Proudly inducted into the FIBA Hall of Fame in 2009 as a coach, he is also in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame and Spanish Basketball Hall of Fame. Ferrandiz passed away aged 93 during July 2022.



54.

USA, 'THE OTHER DREAM TEAM' AND CIS WOMEN TOOK BARCELONA BY STORM

If fans globally voted for their favorite and most memorable Olympic basketball tournament, then 1992 in Barcelona would come top. The champion USA 'Dream Team' saw a roster unmatched in history as NBA players lined up for the first time. It included the likes of Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson, Larry Bird, Scottie Pippen, Charles Barkley and Patrick Ewing. Nobody got close as they beat Croatia 117-85 in the Final, with Barkley the leading scorer with 18 points per game. Croatia still had a super talented team with Drazen Petrovic, Toni Kukoc, Dino Radja and Stojan Vrankovic. A legendary Lithuania lineup nicknamed 'The Other Dream Team' and containing Arvydas Sabonis, Sarunas Marciulionis, Arturas Karnisovas and Rimas Kurtinaitis captured bronze. In the women's tournament, the Commonwealth of Independent States overcame an opening day defeat to Cuba to eventually claim gold. FIBA Hall of Fame forward Natalia Zasulskaya averaged almost 18 points per game and the key was a memorable 79-73 Semi-Final win against USA, who had to settle for bronze. CIS then took down first time finalists China 76-66 in the title game.



55.

FIBA EQUIPMENT AND VENUE CENTRE PRIDE IN SHAPING THE SPORT

Founded in 1993, the FIBA Equipment & Venue Centre can take pride in how it continues shaping and improving basketball globally. It has set standards for equipment and facilities, ensured the strict requirements of high-level basketball competitions, promoted the construction of indoor and outdoor facilities, also encouraging the refurbishment of older ones. Securing a high standard of quality, safety and technology has been key. Not only for players, but also for the public and media, who demand innovations. Providing technical assistance, including the Approved Equipment Guide, consistency is also achieved via facilities and equipment inspections. Manufacturers of Approved Equipment must also meet certain testing requirements, carried out by independent FIBA Accredited Test Institutes. The recently introduced bi-annual Partners Summit has been able to provide a platform for more than 120 partners to network and exchange on industry developments.



56.

RECORD CROWD SEES DREAM TEAM II ROMP TO GLORY AT 1994 WORLD CUP

The novelty of NBA players in the USA national team didn't wear off after the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. Excitement was at fever pitch at the FIBA Basketball World Cup 1994 in Canada, as the USA rolled to a third title. The SkyDome in Toronto registered a World Cup record crowd of 32,616 spectators as the Americans blew out Russia 137-94 in the Final. Dubbed 'Dream Team II,' the USA had NBA superstars such as Alonzo Mourning, Dominique Wilkins, Dan Majerle, Reggie Miller, Shawn Kemp and Shaquille O'Neal on board. Russia's leading players were Sergei Bazarevich and Sergei Babkov, while bronze medallists Croatia were still powered by Dino Radja, Toni Kukoc and Stojan Vrankovic. USA averaged an incredible 120 points a game, with O'Neal crowned MVP and Kemp, Miller, Bazarevich and Radja completing the All-Star Five.



57.

BRAZILIAN SUNSHINE AND RAINING WITH FIBA HALL OF FAMERS IN CLASSIC 1994 TOURNAMENT

Labeled one of the greatest tournaments of all-time, the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 1994 in Australia was drenched with eight eventual FIBA Hall of Famers. That figure is more than a third of the entire female Hall of Fame list - an astonishing statistic. A trio of Hall of Famers propelled Brazil to a historic first ever global title, with a line-up that was one of the best in women's hoops history and included Hortencia Marcari, Janeth Arcain and 'Magic' Paula Goncalves. The key battle was when Brazil beat USA 110-107 in the Semi-Finals, a contest many still consider as one of the greatest games ever, with Brazil's iconic trio combining for a stunning 84 points. Brazil then beat a resilient China and the legendary Zheng Haixia 96-87 in the title game. USA edged out Australia in the battle for bronze, with the clash including FIBA Hall of Famers Teresa Edwards and Michelle Timms for the respective teams. Elsewhere, inductees Margo Dydek of Poland and Isabelle Fijalkowski of France also both graced the competition.



58.



**LINDSAY AND ANDREW GAZE:
AUSTRALIA'S RENOWNED FIRST
FAMILY OF BASKETBALL**

The achievements of Lindsay Gaze and his son Andrew are woven deeply into Australian basketball history, as evidenced by their FIBA Hall of Fame inductions in 2010 and 2013. Lindsay played at the 1964 Olympic Games and 1970 FIBA Basketball World Cup, also then coaching 104 games from 1971 to 1984, incorporating three FIBA Basketball World Cups and four Olympics. He was also Melbourne Tigers coach from 1970 to 2005, winning two NBL titles. Their Olympics paths crossed in 1984 at Andrew's first and Lindsay's last edition. Gaze junior would play at five Olympics and remains the second-highest Olympic points scorer of all time – also acting as Australia's flag-bearer at the Sydney 2000 Games. Attending four FIBA Basketball World Cups, including 1994 as leading tournament scorer with 23.9 points per game, Andrew is the third all-time scorer in the competition. He won the NBA title in 1999 with the San Antonio Spurs and is a Melbourne Tigers legend. Playing for his father, he was NBL MVP seven times and is the league's all-time leading scorer with 18,908 points over a 22-season career, at an average of 30.9 points per game.



59.

EUROLEAGUE WOMEN RESET IS LAUNCH PAD FOR SOARING POPULARITY AND SUCCESS

Ever since EuroLeague Women was effectively relaunched in 1996, the competition has been a magnet for the biggest global stars in female hoops. The most famous players in the game have stepped out for an array of clubs right across the continent. Champions have been crowned from a range of countries including France, Spain, Russia, Turkey, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia. Renowned worldwide, EuroLeague Women has enjoyed unprecedented and spectacular digital growth across its channels during recent years – an increase greater than for any other FIBA competition. This clearly underlines the soaring popularity of EuroLeague Women and how it continues to capture the imagination of fans. Meanwhile, the 2022 spectacular season ending in Istanbul witnessed a record-breaking Final Four crowd of close to 10,000 spectators. EuroLeague Women has also been boosted by the Proudly Woman campaign which promotes the values that the league's players and clubs display every time they step onto the court. This has maximized their influence to inspire fans and communities across Europe and beyond, to further promote women's basketball - one of FIBA's key strategic pillars for the working cycle of 2019-2023.



60.

ANGOLAN STAR JEAN-JACQUES CONCEICAO - AN AFRICAN HERO AND FIBA LEGEND

Jean-Jacques Conceicao not only enjoyed superstar status in Angola but was an African giant of basketball and FIBA icon. Born in Kinshasa in 1964, he moved to Angola and propelled Primeiro de Agosto Luanda to five domestic league titles and four Angolan cups between 1983 and 1988. He then inspired Benfica Lisbon to seven Portuguese league titles and five cup trophies, also spending time at Limoges CSP and Unicaja Malaga. He then took Telecom Lisbon to three league titles and two cups. He transformed Angola into a basketball superpower in Africa with seven FIBA AfroBasket titles, two silver medals and a bronze. He also appeared at the FIBA Basketball World Cup in 1986, 1990 and 1994, as well as the 1992 and 1996 Olympic Games. He was crowned Africa's MVP as part of the 50th anniversary of FIBA Africa's foundation in 2011 and two years later entered the FIBA Hall of Fame. His amazing legacy also lives on through his son Jacques, who played at the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019.



61.

YUGOSLAVIA LIFTS NAISMITH TROPHY IN THRILLING '98 WORLD CUP

The FIBA Basketball World Cup 1998 in Greece was an exceptional tournament with a thrilling and memorable ending. Yugoslavia firstly defeated hosts Greece 78-73 in the Semi-Finals and then edged Russia in the title game, 64-62, sparking incredible celebrations among their traveling fans. Yugoslavia star Zeljko Rebraca shined with 13.6 points and 9.1 rebounds. He showed his class when it mattered with 20 points and 13 rebounds in the Semi-Final and then 16 points and 11 boards in the title game. Thirty-five of the 62 games played at the event were decided by 10 points or less, with a lot going down to the wire. Many players shone, including Sarunas Jasikevicius of Lithuania, Andrew Gaze of Australia and Italian duo Gianluca Basile and Giacomo Galanda. There were also rising stars like Argentina's Manu Ginobili, who would win Olympic gold in the same venue in Athens six years later. Meanwhile, despite the absence of NBA players because of disputes around the lockout, USA were only undone 66-64 by Russia in the Semi-Finals and bounced back to beat Greece 84-61 for third.



62.

USA DOMINATE IN 1998, WHILE THE OPALS ALSO SHINE ON GERMAN SOIL

The FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 1998 in Germany witnessed USA re-establishing themselves as a dominant force, while Australia will never forget their first podium step. No doubt stung from missing the Final in 1994 for the first time since the 1970's, USA were unstoppable as they made amends with 9 straight wins to take gold. Dawn Staley handed out 6 assists per game, while Lisa Leslie was unstoppable with 17 points per outing. Only seriously pushed hard by Russia in the Final in a 71-65 triumph, Staley sprinkled the star dust by with a phenomenal 12 assists to seal the title. Australia beat defending champions Brazil to take bronze and a first medal. FIBA Hall of Fame Michele Timms and Lauren Jackson both shone, the latter at just 17-years old.



63.

FIBA, NBA TEAM UP FOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT WITH 1ST BASKETBALL WITHOUT BORDERS CAMP IN 2001

Since 2001, FIBA and the NBA have collaborated on the Basketball Without Borders (BWB) initiative to develop the sport globally and foster life skills of leadership, health and wellness for campers. The 2001 camp in Italy had Vlade Divac and Toni Kukoc helping 50 campers aged 12-14 from former Yugoslavian countries affected by war. By 2003, basketball was the main focus, with campers up to 18 years old and selected on basketball potential. BWB Africa was launched the same year, the Americas in 2004 and Asia in 2005. The first Global Camp was at the 2015 NBA All-Star weekend. Girl campers from Senegal were invited to BWB Africa 2010 and by 2015, it became the first camp to get girls from all over a continent. BWB now focuses on providing elite basketball instruction and development opportunities, elevating basketball in each region and having global basketball ambassadors facilitating. With now more than 60 camps in 39 cities, across 30 countries globally, over 3,700 campers from 133 different countries have participated, with 96 alumni in the NBA or WNBA.



64.

NBA-LADEN USA MISS PODIUM WHILE YUGOSLAVIA PIP ARGENTINA TO 2002 GLORY

The FIBA Basketball World Cup 2002 in Indiana sent tremors across the globe as a USA team of NBA players missed the podium for the first time. Led by Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Famer Manu Ginobili, Argentina famously upset the Americans, 87-80. It meant a USA team including the likes of Reggie Miller and Paul Pierce faced a Quarter-Final against Yugoslavia. It was Sacramento Kings sharpshooter Peja Stojakovic who fired 20 points to take the reigning champions to an 81-78 victory. Yugoslavia went on to defend their crown with an exciting 84-77 overtime success in the Final against Argentina, as European superstar Dejan Bodiroga racked up a stellar 27 points. The brilliance of tournament MVP Dirk Nowitzki, who averaged 24 points and 8.2 rebounds per game, was also on display as he led Germany to a bronze medal, beating New Zealand 117-94 in the Third-Place Game.



65.

CUT AND PASTE USA PERFECTION, TAYLOR AND CHEN TURN HEADS ON DEBUT

There was a strong sense of déjà vu at the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 2002 as USA posted another perfect campaign. MVP Lisa Leslie averaged 17.2 points and 8.1 rebounds per game as USA extended their winning streak in the competition to 19 games with a fourth title in five editions. After easing past Australia 71-56 in the Semi-Finals, they outlasted Russia 79-74 in a classic Final. 2002 was also memorable for the enthusiastic crowds across China in the venue cities of Zhangjiagang, Changshu, Taicang, Wuzhong, Changzhou, Suzhou, Huaian, Zhenjiang and Nanjing. While the hosts missed the podium, fans loved seeing the brilliant teenager Nan Chen lead their team in scoring and rebounding. Future 2006 MVP Penny Taylor of Australia debuted and helped the Opals repeat their third place finish of 1998.



66.

YAO MING BECOMES FIRST FIBA PLAYER TO BE NUMBER ONE NBA DRAFT PICK

The 2002 NBA Draft was historic as China standout Yao Ming became the first ever international player to be selected as number one pick. Chosen by the Houston Rockets, he became an instant legend in his homeland and beyond. The highest previous international pick had been a year earlier when Spaniard Pau Gasol was chosen in third spot by the Atlanta Hawks. Yao remains one of only two players without previous competitive experience on US soil to be drafted first overall, the other being Italian Andrea Bargnani, selected by the Toronto Raptors in 2006. The historic selection of Yao also sparked an increase in international players being picked first during subsequent years, though mostly involving those with NCAA experience. His presence also significantly contributed to more international players competing in the NBA. A record 113 started the 2016-17 campaign, with just four involved back in 1946-47.



67.

THE RISE AND RISE OF WOMEN'S HOOPS AROUND THE WORLD

One of the most striking features of the past three FIBA decades has been the significant increase in the visibility and popularity of women's basketball globally. While many trailblazers and legends graced the sport before them, there's been a steady evolution of female ballers becoming household names since the 1990's. An incredible Brazil team during that era was a catalyst. The legendary trio of Hortencia, 'Magic' Paula Goncalves and Janeth Arcain showed the potential for the women's game. The USA also produced a conveyor belt of ballers with profiles that would be truly global – including the likes of Lisa Leslie and Diana Taurasi. Similarly, Opals' legend and future FIBA Hall of Famer Lauren Jackson would be another player with worldwide appeal. This evolution of female hoop stars gathered even more rapid pace during the past decade, with many competitions enjoying incredible growth and interest across all platforms. From USA duo Breanna Stewart and AJa Wilson, to Emma Meesseman of Belgium, Xu Han of China and Ezi Magbegor of Australia the current leading lights are continuing the dynasty and inspiring the next generation. This is also why as we head towards 100 years of FIBA, the growth and development of the female game continues to be a key strategic priority, both on and off the court.



68.

THIRD SECRETARY GENERAL PATRICK BAUMANN LED MODERNIZATION OF FIBA

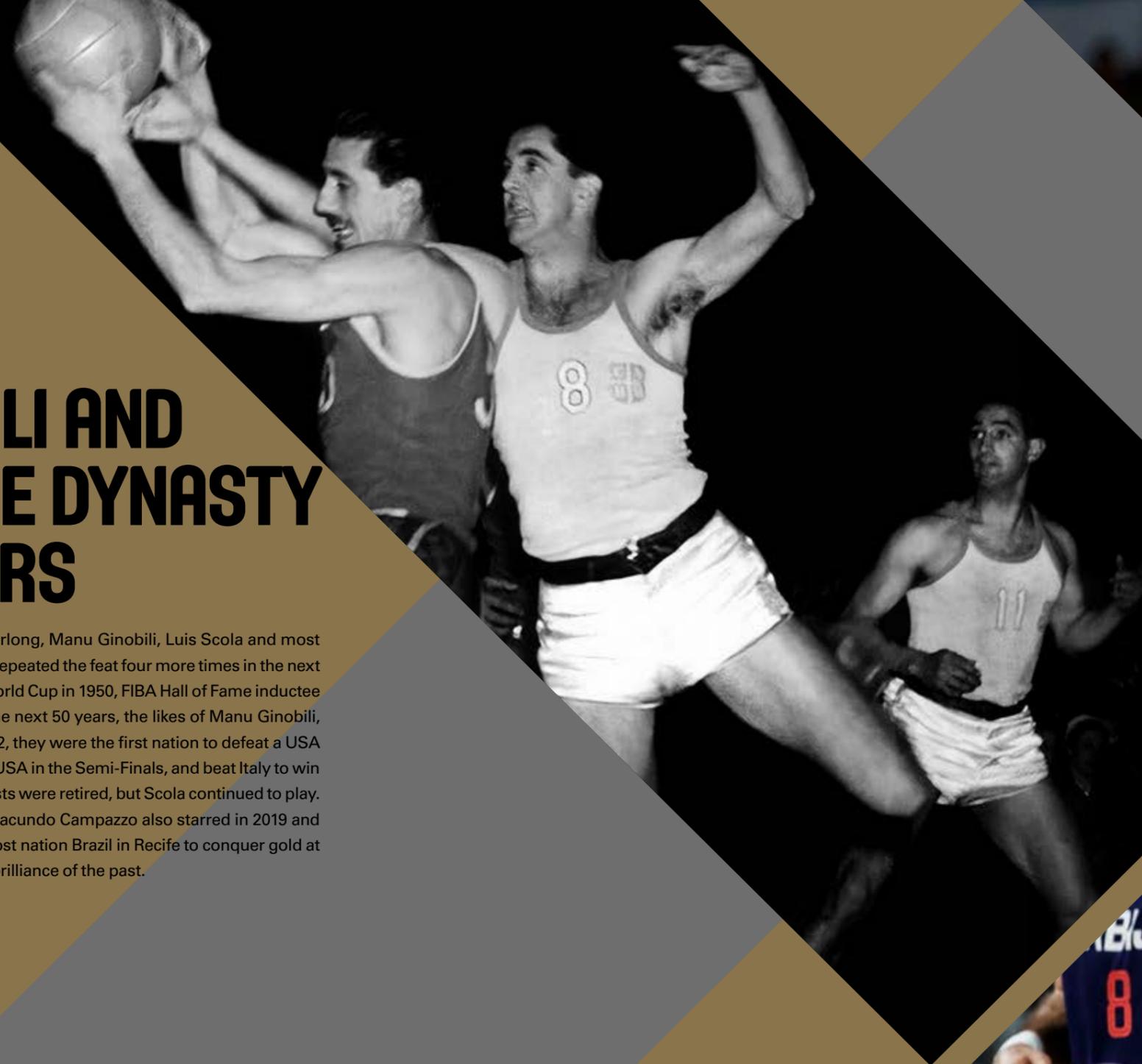
The sheer scale of the late Patrick Baumann's legacy is immeasurable since his vision, expertise and leadership as FIBA Secretary General between 2002 and 2018 still benefits basketball today. Unexpectedly passing away at just 51 years of age, Baumann helped many organizations, including the International Olympic Committee. The third FIBA Secretary General, after William Jones and Borislav Stankovic, his embracing of innovation and change strengthened the sport, made it more popular and accessible, stimulating unprecedented growth. This was driven by modernization and radical changes, including to FIBA's governance structure. The 'ONE FIBA' coming together of all Regional Offices into one corporate group was also important. Another significant chapter was his passion for 3x3 to become an Olympic sport, with it ultimately enjoying a debut at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. Baumann masterminded the creation and implementation of FIBA's New Competition System from 2017, which introduced popular national team windows. This culminated in a spectacular 32-team FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019 in China. His impact and popularity were so profound that the FIBA state-of-the-art headquarters in Mies were renamed the Patrick Baumann House of Basketball in 2018. He was a dedicated member of the International Olympic Committee and served on numerous IOC Commissions in various roles. Baumann was also on the International Advisory Board of the World Academy of Sport in 2009, a member of the International Council of Arbitration for Sport (ICAS) since 2010 and was elected as a Council member of the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) in 2011 and re-elected in 2015. He was also a member of the Executive Committee and the Foundation Board of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and President of the Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF). But perhaps more than anything, Baumann being posthumously awarded the prestigious Olympic Order in 2019 demonstrated just how much of an absolute colossus of sport he was.



69.

FROM FURLONG TO GINOBI LI AND SCOLA TO CAMPAZZO - THE DYNASTY OF ARGENTINA SUPERSTARS

Throughout their rich history, there's been a dynasty of Argentina superstars, including Oscar Furlong, Manu Ginobili, Luis Scola and most recently, Facundo Campazzo. Winning their first South American Championship in 1934, Argentina repeated the feat four more times in the next 9 years, while also debuting at the 1948 London Olympics. Then, at the inaugural FIBA Basketball World Cup in 1950, FIBA Hall of Fame inductee Furlong etched his name in history by taking his country to gold. After limited global impact for the next 50 years, the likes of Manu Ginobili, Andres Nocioni, Luis Scola and Pepe Sanchez made history. At the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2002, they were the first nation to defeat a USA team made up entirely of NBA players as they claimed silver. In 2004 in Athens, Argentina defeated USA in the Semi-Finals, and beat Italy to win a precious Olympic gold. They also claimed bronze in Beijing. During 2017, Ginobili and Nocioni's vests were retired, but Scola continued to play. As a 39-year-old, he guided Argentina to silver at the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019. Playmaker Facundo Campazzo also starred in 2019 and most recently led his team, alongside tournament MVP Gabriel Deck, to a nail-biting victory over host nation Brazil in Recife to conquer gold at the FIBA AmeriCup 2022. Both are now the centerpiece for a new generation eager to emulate the brilliance of the past.



70.

OSCAR SCHMIDT: BRAZIL'S CELEBRATED 'HOLY HAND' AND PAN AM GAMES HERO

Arguably the greatest scorer in basketball history and fondly known as 'Mão Santa' (Holy Hand), Brazilian Oscar Schmidt is a FIBA legend. He competed at four FIBA Basketball World Cups and five Olympic Games, finishing as the best scorer in three. He famously led Brazil to 1987 Pan American Games gold when he poured in 46 points in a 120-115 victory, with his team having trailed by 14 points at halftime to the USA. He is the record holder for most FIBA Basketball World Cup career points with 906 in 34 games – more than 26 points per game. He averaged 34.6 points at the 1990 edition, the highest in history and also led Brazil to bronze in 1978. At the 1988 Seoul Olympics, he averaged 42.3 points, including an Olympic record 55 points against Spain. At Atlanta 1996, he averaged 27.4 points to finish with a career and record breaking 1,093 Olympic points at 28.8 per game. In his glorious club competitions career, Oscar amassed a record 49,703 points. Inducted into the FIBA Hall of Fame in 2010, Naismith Hall of Fame in 2013 and Italian Hall of Fame in 2017, he is also revered for turning down the NBA so he could play for Brazil's national team at the Olympics.



71.

SPAIN STARTS STREAK OF DOMINANCE AT 2006 WORLD CUP

Japan hosted the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2006, a tournament with 24 teams, that set a new spectator record of 225,000 across the competition. There were also 3,000 media representatives, with games broadcast to over 150 countries including most African nations for the first time. Two spectacular Semi-Finals lit up the event. Greece stunned a star-studded USA 101-95 by coming back from 12 points down at half-time, inspired by Sofoklis Schortsianitis, Theo Papaloukas and Vassilis Spanoulis. Spain survived a 75-74 classic with Argentina despite losing tournament MVP Pau Gasol in crunch time with a broken foot after being fouled. Incredibly, he made two free-throws before exiting. Despite Gasol's absence, Spain rolled to gold 70-47 to be crowned champions for the first time, behind six three-pointers of Jorge Garbajosa, as USA beat Argentina 96-81 for bronze. It sparked Spain's medal rush, winning FIBA EuroBasket titles in 2009, 2011, 2015 and 2022, plus a second world title in 2019. They also claimed Olympic silver medals in 2008 and 2012, and a bronze in 2016.



72.

OPALS SPARKLE IN BRAZIL TO CONQUER THE WORLD

Still one of the most talked about female hoops tournaments ever, the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 2006 was sensational. A first title for Australia saw them become only the fourth winner after USA, Soviet Union and Brazil. The 9-0 Opals were led by MVP Penny Taylor while Lauren Jackson finished as the competition's top scorer with an average of 20.2 points per game. Australia faced Russia for gold, with their opponents beating USA 75-69 in a classic Semi-Final to end a 26-game winning streak for the defending champions. The Opals saved their best until last, beating Russia 91-74 as Taylor dropped 28-points while Jackson harvested 16 points and 11 rebounds. USA salvaged some pride by taking bronze ahead of host nation Brazil.



73.

THE GREATEST OLYMPIC GOLD MEDAL GAME AS USA OUTLAST SPAIN

When the USA beat Spain to 2008 gold in Beijing, it was viewed as the greatest ever Olympic basketball Final. Boasting LeBron James, Kobe Bryant, Dwyane Wade, Carmelo Anthony, Dwight Howard and Chris Paul, USA hammered everyone, including Spain 119-82 in the Preliminary Round. Yet Spain had great talent with Pau and Marc Gasol, Juan Carlos Navarro, Rudy Fernandez and teenage rising star Ricky Rubio. They also arrived as 2006 FIBA Basketball World Cup champions. Known as the 'Redeem Team' USA had to make amends for bronze, as well as their country taking third place at the 2004 Olympics. The Beijing Final was not like the Preliminary Round. Spain pushed hard and stayed in contention. The pressure was on the USA when Spain narrowed to five points heading down the stretch. But Kobe Bryant, one of the true basketball greats, thrived in difficult moments. He dropped a three-pointer and was fouled on the play by Rudy Fernandez, who had led Spain with 22 points. It was a defining moment that helped secure a 118-107 victory, with Wade dropping 27 points and James adding 20.



74.

2010 YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES - 3X3 BASKETBALL DEBUTS ON GLOBAL STAGE

Singapore holds a special place in 3x3 basketball history after its first Olympic appearance came at the 2010 Youth Olympic Games (YOG). Fans flocked to Singapore's urban downtown venue to see 20 countries in the boys' and girls' events. In the boys event, Greece beat United States 34-25 for bronze, prior to Serbia taking a 22-9 derby victory over Croatia to land gold. The United States took the bronze with a 34-16 win over neighbors Canada in the girls event, with China beating Australia 33-29 to win the title. President of the International Olympic Committee Thomas Bach spoke about the resounding success of 3x3 at the next YOG in 2014, especially the positive reactions and excitement of both the fans and players in Nanjing. By 2017, the IOC had endorsed 3x3 as part of the Olympic basketball program and it subsequently debuted at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.



75.

DURANT-INSPIRED USA ROMPED TO GLORY AT WORLD CUP IN ISTANBUL

The unbeaten USA side that claimed a thrilling win at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing had the alias of The 'Redeem Team' after helping their nation bounce back from disappointing 2004 and 2006 bronze medals at the Athens Olympics and World Cup in Japan respectively. The FIBA Basketball World Cup 2010 roster in Turkey had none of those Beijing Olympic stars. But with Kevin Durant, Russell Westbrook, Derrick Rose and Stephen Curry, they had power and a chip on the shoulder after some called them a 'USA B Team'. And they were dominant in every game except a close one with Brazil, defeating Lithuania by 15 in the Semi-Finals, and hosts Turkey 81-64 in the Final. Durant averaged 22.8 points per game and was crowned MVP. Lithuania celebrated taking the last podium step by beating Serbia 99-88. Maybe this time they were the 'Redeem Team' because they had come up short of the Quarter-Finals at the 2009 FIBA EuroBasket and needed one of four wild cards on offer just to participate in Turkey.



76.

USA BOUNCE BACK AND HOME FAVORITE HORAKOVA STEALS HEADLINES

It was an action-packed FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 2010 and even though USA won an eighth title, hosts Czech Republic took the limelight. They made an historic run to the Final in front of packed crowds as FIBA Hall of Famer and team leader Hana Horakova took MVP honors. With Eva Viteckova also an All-Star Five member, the hosts memorably claimed a classic 81-77 Semi-Final overtime success against Belarus. But they fell 89-69 in the Final as the flawless USA delivered redemption, having lost their crown to Australia in 2006. Spain made history with a first medal behind a stellar 18 points and 11 rebounds per game from Sancho Lyttle.



77.

SERBIA TIP-OFF 3X3 WORLD CUP DOMINANCE, USA WOMEN INAUGURAL CHAMPIONS

Serbia and USA were crowned maiden winners at the first FIBA 3x3 World Cup in 2012, with the famous Zappeion in downtown Athens, Greece a superb backdrop to the event. Fuelled by the exceptional Dusan Domovic Bulut, Serbia ultimately beat France 16-13, with Ukraine edging out Israel for bronze. While second to Qatar in 2014, Serbia took gold in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2022. Skylar Diggins was the headline name for USA in 2012 as they took gold with a thrilling 17-16 win against France. Australia pipped Ukraine for bronze. Since USA repeated their title success in 2014, Czech Republic, Russia, Italy, China and France have all been champions in subsequent women's editions. The first edition also had a mixed event. France beat Argentina 14-8 for the title and Ukraine defeated Czech Republic 15-8 for bronze. 3x3 has since debuted at the Olympics with a hugely successful launch at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.



78.

KYRIE'S FINAL PERFORMANCE FOR THE AGES LIFTED USA TO THE TITLE

The FIBA Basketball World Cup 2014 in Spain had close games, unforgettable plays and brilliant individual performances, including one from Kyrie Irving. The USA star dazzled throughout, but especially in the 129-92 Final rout of Serbia. Having made all six of his three-pointers for a game-high 26 points, he was named MVP. Many had expected a title showdown involving Spain, but France upset the hosts 65-52 in the Quarter-Finals. Center Rudy Gobert's block on Spanish great Pau Gasol made him an instant hero back home. Though France then had a 35-point effort from Nicolas Batum, they lost 90-85 to Serbia in the Semi-Finals. But his super 27 points against Lithuania delivered a 95-93 win for bronze. Elsewhere, for the first time in their history, Senegal advanced from the Group Phase after surprising Puerto Rico and Croatia. The Philippines were back after 36 years and threw near upsets at Croatia, Greece and Argentina, before defeating Senegal. Finland had the best traveling support in the competition's history with 10,000 fans creating an unforgettable atmosphere in Bilbao.



79.

MVP MOORE ON FIRE, SPANISH HISTORY AND HEARTBREAK FOR TURKEY

The FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 2014 saw USA crowned champions again, while Spain celebrated a historic new chapter and hosts Turkey fell agonizingly short. MVP Maya Moore inspired USA's ninth title and unbeaten campaign, while Brittney Griner dunked her way into the All-Star Five. Spain made their first Final and despite losing 77-64 inside the Fenerbahce Arena, they were super competitive as Alba Torrens and Sancho Lyttle sealed All-Star Five berths. Australia returned to the podium by inflicting agony on Turkey with a 74-44 win in the bronze medal game. Meanwhile, Mozambique flew the flag for African basketball with pride on their first appearance.



80.

ONE FIBA BECOMES A REALITY

A revolution in the world of International Sports Federations, the ONE FIBA concept became a reality after National Member Federations amended the FIBA General Statutes. The purpose was to strengthen the organization to better meet demanding global challenges, in a fast-paced and modern-day environment, as well as capitalizing fully on strategic growth opportunities. Working closer with its Regions and making a number of key changes to its operations globally, ONE FIBA has ensured players, clubs, leagues, partners and other stakeholders are fully taken into account in decision-making processes. ONE FIBA also still ensures National Member Federations are central to the sport's governance. Collectively and with equal voting rights, they still form FIBA's supreme authority, the Congress. United by the same vision, the decision and actions intertwined within ONE FIBA were implemented with the goal of making basketball the most popular sports community in the world.



81.

BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS LEAGUE LAUNCH IN 2016 CAPTURED THE IMAGINATION

Since its historic and exciting inception in 2016, the Basketball Champions League (BCL) has continued to go from strength to strength, capturing the imagination of fans. It was launched as a partnership between FIBA and 11 top European leagues, including Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Spain and Turkey. The BCL aims are to nurture new European talents, protect domestic leagues, promote sporting results and openness of competitions, provide a sound business model for all clubs, bring coherence, transparency and unity to European club competitions and protect the integrity of the game. Spanning more than 30 countries, clubs qualify through their respective national leagues and the insistence on opportunities for young and homegrown players has been particularly praised. The landmark first edition saw Iberostar Tenerife claim the title behind Final Four MVP Marius Grigonis. They repeated the feat in 2022 as Lenovo Tenerife. Final Four hosts AEK were crowned 2018 champions and Spanish side San Pablo Burgos are also two-time winners (2020 and 2021), with Virtus Bologna crowned 2019 champions.



82.

USA TAKE 10TH CROWN AS STEWART SHINES, WHILE OPALS SPARKLE IN SPAIN

The FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup 2018 in Tenerife saw USA win gold for the 10th time, becoming the first nation to reach the double-digit landmark for title wins. In front of Her Majesty Queen Letizia of Spain, the USA beat the Opals 73-56 to secure gold and a place at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. USA leader Breanna Stewart took MVP honors, while Liz Cambage produced jaw-dropping displays to drive Australia to silver. Astou Ndour helped hosts Spain bounce back from missing the Final as they took bronze with a 67-60 win against debutantes Belgium, who had wowed everyone with their entertaining basketball. Re-branded as the FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup, this also added to the buzz.



83.

SPAIN REIGN BY CAPTURING FIRST-EVER 32-TEAM WORLD CUP IN CHINA

The FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019 in China lived up to the hype with the tournament expanded to 32 teams and the centerpiece of FIBA's new system of competition. A staggering 420 qualifying games were played, bringing national team basketball unprecedented attention around the globe. A major headline came when a Rudy Gobert inspired France beat USA 89-79 in the Quarter-Finals, meaning a new champion would be crowned. Australia looked podium-ready but blew a double-digit lead over Spain in the Semi-Finals. Marc Gasol fired 33 points in a 95-88 double overtime classic. Led by Luis Scola, Argentina beat France 80-66 in the other Semi-Final. Big man Scola, who was already a 2002 World Cup runner up and Olympic gold medalist, dropped 28 points and 13 rebounds. But Spain wasn't to be denied, winning with a 95-75 triumph behind 20 points from Ricky Rubio, while France bounced back 67-59 against Australia to take bronze. Rubio was tournament MVP, with teammate Gasol, France's Evan Fournier, Serbia's Bogdan Bogdanovic and Argentina's Scola making up the All-Star Five.



84.

EXCITING BCL AMERICAS
COMPETITION IS LAUNCHED

Basketball in the Americas achieved a new level of representation and quality in September 2019 when FIBA officially launched the Basketball Champions League Americas. Mirroring the Basketball Champions League in Europe, BCL Americas took over from Liga de las Americas (FIBA Americas League) as the elite competition on the continent. Twelve clubs from six countries participated in the 2019-20 season, having qualified through their domestic leagues. In a pandemic interrupted first season, Quimsa of Argentina won the silverware by beating Flamengo of Brazil 92-86. This also set up a 2021 FIBA Intercontinental Cup contest against San Pablo Burgos of Spain, but they were beaten by the BCL European winners. For the 2020-21 season, Flamengo of Brazil conquered host club Real Esteli of Nicaragua 84-80 at the Final Eight. This format was retained for 2022 when Brazilian side Sao Paulo outlasted Bigua of Uruguay 98-84 in the Final. The first three BCL Americas seasons have witnessed 12 teams participating from 10 different nations.



85.

KOBE BRYANT, A GLOBAL AMBASSADOR OF THE GAME

Greats are remembered forever because of their basketball accomplishments, but the most celebrated, like Kobe Bryant, also used their platform to help others realize their dreams. Tragically passing away in January 2020, in a helicopter crash, along with his 13-year-old daughter Gianna and seven others, this global icon will never be forgotten. A fierce competitor, an inspiration, genius and champion, Bryant was named the Greatest Laker of all time. Also a FIBA Basketball World Cup 2019 ambassador, he ignited a passion for the game in so many. Dubbing himself 'Black Mamba', his NBA career with the Lakers harvested 18 All-Star Game appearances, five NBA crowns and two Finals MVP awards. His 81 points in 2006 was the second most points ever scored in an NBA game. With Team USA, he won a FIBA AmeriCup crown in 2007 and Olympic gold medals in 2008 and 2012. His clutch four-point play for the USA in the Beijing Olympics Final is the stuff of legend. After retiring, he mentored sportsmen and sportswomen. In 2018, he also won the Academy Award for Best Animated Short Film for his 2017 film 'Dear Basketball'. He coached his daughter Gianna and was eager for women to reach new heights in the sport. A basketball hero to so many, Kobe's global impact will be everlasting.



86.

FIBA RISES TO THE CHALLENGE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Unprecedented in scale and going beyond sporting parameters, the COVID-19 pandemic which began in 2020 shook the entire world. In meeting this unprecedented challenge, FIBA's operational capacity and quality decision-making, enhanced its credibility and reputation, most notably within the Olympic Movement. Clear priorities were set around the health of the participants, integrity of the sport, protection of FIBA competitions and players and the continuation of implementing strategic pillars. A new revised competition calendar was designed and for example, FIBA facilitated 161 Continental Cup Qualifiers in protective bubble environments across November 2020 and February 2021. Faced with unpredictable health developments and inconclusive scientific data to safeguard the health of the players, protect the competitions and maintain a solid financial and commercial position for itself and its members, FIBA had to adapt accordingly – and it succeeded.



87.

FIBA, NBA COLLABORATE FOR HISTORIC LAUNCH OF BASKETBALL AFRICA LEAGUE

FIBA and the NBA reinforced their joint commitment to improve basketball with the creation of the Basketball Africa League (BAL) in February 2019. It marked the NBA's first collaboration to operate a league outside of North America, also building on a joint Basketball Without Borders youth development program with FIBA. The announcement at the NBA All-Star Weekend featured FIBA Secretary General Andreas Zagklis, NBA Commissioner Adam Silver, FIBA Africa President Hamane Niang, FIBA Executive Director Africa Alphonse Bilé, Charlotte Hornets chairman Michael Jordan, NBA Vice President and Managing Director for Africa Amadou Gallo Fall - named BAL President. Replacing the FIBA Africa Basketball League, the first season was pandemic affected and eventually held in Kigali, Rwanda, during May 2021, with 12 teams. Zamalek of Egypt defeated Tunisian side US Monastir to secure the first ever BAL title and a spot in the FIBA Intercontinental Cup 2022. US Monastir would bounce back to beat Angolan side Petro de Luanda 83-72 to win the BAL 2022 edition.



88.

THE SPARKLING OLYMPIC DEBUT OF 3X3

The Olympic debut of 3x3 basketball in Tokyo made a resounding, positive impact. While the pandemic prevented spectators attending, existing 3x3 fans were joined by an army of new followers who all watched the action remotely. On Day 1, French President Emmanuel Macron, and USA First Lady Dr. Jill Biden attended the women's blockbuster between their respective countries. In the women's Gold Medal Game between USA and the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC), IOC President Thomas Bach was on hand to watch USA make history and become 3x3's first Olympic gold medalists. USA's gold medal winner and superstar Kelsey Plum called it the highest achievement of her career. Meanwhile, Latvia took men's gold as FIBA 3x3 World Tour star Karlis Lasmanis fired the Baltic country to a title and the team were subsequently given an unforgettable parade in Riga. In Russia, the gold medal game with Latvia was the most viewed event of the entire Olympics on Match TV, the country's sports broadcaster and Olympic rights holder. After this amazing opening, 3x3 is destined to be even bigger at Paris 2024 and one of the most eagerly followed Olympic events.



89.

FIBA ANNOUNCES HISTORICAL WEST ASIA SUPER LEAGUE (WASL) LAUNCH

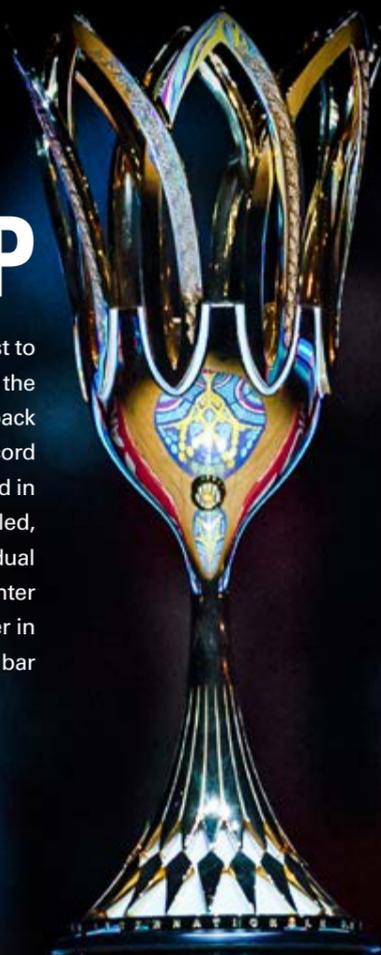
Taking one more step in its strategy to shape international club competitions, FIBA announced in August 2022 the launch of the inaugural West Asia Super League (WASL). The WASL is part of FIBA's commitment to developing National Federations and teams through respecting the impact and importance of national leagues. It's a pathway toward the FIBA Intercontinental Cup for the top 18 clubs across 13 countries in four of the six FIBA Asia Region Sub Zones: West Asia, Gulf, South Asia and Central Asia. The leading teams in West Asia and the Gulf will play within their Sub-Zone on a home-and-away system to advance forward to the WASL Final 8 which will include teams from India and Kazakhstan. From there, qualified teams will proceed to the FIBA Asia Champions Cup which is where they can earn their spot in FIBA's prestigious Intercontinental Cup. The 16 clubs writing history in Asian club basketball were known at a spectacular draw that took place in Beirut in October 2022 and includes Al Manama (BRN), Shahrdari Gorgan (IRI), Zobahan (IRI), Al Naft (IRQ), Al Nassr (KSA), Al Hilal (KSA), Kazma (KUW), Kuwait SC (KUW), Beirut Club (LBN), Al Riyadi (LBN), Al Bashaer (OMA), Orthodox Ramallah (PLE), Al Sadd (QAT), Al Ittihad Ahli of Aleppo (SYR), Al Karamah (SYR), Shabab Al Ahli Dubai (UAE).



90.

SYDNEY HOSTS RECORD-BREAKING FIBA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL WORLD CUP

With top class organization, incredible crowds, exciting games and a Hollywood style ending for a female hoops legend, Sydney had it all. Australia lost to France in front of 10,000 fans on the first night, while Puerto Rico had made history with a maiden victory on opening day. They would then proudly reach the Quarter-Finals for the first time. By the Semi-Finals, USA stormed past Canada and China won a tense thriller against Australia. But the Opals bounced back with bronze as the legendary Lauren Jackson scored 30 points in a fairytale finish to her stellar career. She did it while equaling the All-Time appearance record in the competition. USA took their 11th title by beating China in front of a sold out 16,000 fans at the Sydney Superdome. A'ja Wilson was MVP and joined in the All-Star Five by teammate Breanna Stewart, plus Xu Han of China, Steph Talbot of Australia and Bridget Carleton of Canada. Multiple records tumbled, including USA recording a best ever 145 points in a game, plus the highest ever team efficiency score. Korea's Leeseul Kang racked up a best ever individual efficiency score of 44 and China showed their attractive team-orientated approach by setting a highest ever 41 assists in a game. Meanwhile, exciting center duo Xu Han of China and Australia's Ezi Magbegor both equaled the game-high record of 5 blocks, with Lauren Jackson becoming only the third player in history to surpass 600 career points in the competition. So much to love and with an unprecedented overall 145,519 fans in attendance, Sydney raised the bar and set a new standard for those who follow.



FIBA WOMEN'S BASKETBALL WORLD CUP





ICONIC MOMENTS
1932 - 2022

FIBA 90 ICONIC MOMENTS

FIBA - International Basketball Federation
Route Suisse 5,
1295 Mies, Switzerland

T: +41 22 545 00 00
E: communications@fiba.basketball
W: fiba.basketball

*Pictures and documents in this book have been sourced from FIBA events and the FIBA Archives or provided by the FIBA Foundation. FIBA, December 2022. All rights reserved. Graphic Design & Printing: ZADRGA Communications Agency. Printed to mark the occasion of FIBA's 90th Anniversary. *The reproduction and photocopying of this book for commercial purposes without written prior approval by FIBA is prohibited.



Photo captions

