INTRODUCTION

The main characteristic of a sport, which also determines its other properties, is the presence of competitive component. Sportsmen competing in different sports and disciplines, regardless to their characteristics and psychological and physical state, have one common goal, and that is achieving the maximum results and winning the competition.

It could be concluded that things necessary for the highest sport achievements, apart from the knowledge possessed by the coach and his freedom to create, are optimal material and technical conditions, good organization of the whole sportsmen preparation process, and besides luck, a lot of work and positive attitude as well as factors outside training procedures which also contribute to the success (Koprivica & Jelusic, 1991).

In volleyball, special attention is to be paid to younger categories of girl players. Constant adjust-
ment of the coach to players’ current abilities is required, as well as paying attention to certain characteristics and psychological and physical changes (accelerated growth, puberty and similar) which occur during their growth and development. (Baxter-Jones, 1995; Blanksby at all, 1986; Bompa, 2000; Fraser at all, 2006).

Besides the work on physical, technical, tactical and psychological development, attention is to be paid to very important theoretical preparation. The right time to start with theoretical preparation is the youngest age, when properly adjusted of course. It could be applied along with basic sport techniques and individual and group tactics, including physical preparation and any other activity taking place either during the practice or afterwards. Theoretical preparation should set the basics to all training procedures, and later on to be used for building up. (Fratrić, 2006; Hare, 1973; Koprivica, 1998; Kostić et al., 1995; Lazarević, 1994).

The principle of consciousness must be followed if mobilization of all psycho-physical abilities is to be achieved during training procedures. Only the sportsman who understands the requirements, the reasons for performing a certain exercise and the aims of it, can be highly motivated during training procedures. As it is well known, high motivation during practice is one of the most important factors for achieving the required goal.

The aim of this research is to show the use of theoretical preparation in work with younger sportswomen categories, i.e. cadet girl volleyball players. Younger sportswomen category in volleyball stands for younger pre-cadet, pre-cadet, cadet and junior selection. This research deals with girls in cadet age selected to enter Belgrade Girl Volleyball Championship.

The goal of the research is set based on theoretical problem review, researches conducted up-to-date and the defined aim of the research.

The conducted research had for a goal the clarification of some queries concerning theoretical preparation of young girl volleyball players. It should have determined whether theoretical preparation takes place and in what way; what subjects are dealt with, who is conducting the preparation, how young sportswomen react to it, what are the most common problems while conducting such a preparation and similar.

Therefore, the goal of the research was to determine, by interviewing coaches and cadet players, in which degree and how theoretical preparation is applied in training procedures of cadet girl volleyball players.

In accordance with the aim and the goal of research, the following tasks were set:

- Making the interview sheet that is to be used for interviewing the coaches working with cadet girl teams for the purposes of gathering the information on conducting theoretical preparation in work with the players;
- Making the interview sheet that is to be used for interviewing the cadet girl volleyball players with the goal for checking theoretical knowledge on volleyball;
- Conduct the interview with coaches working with younger girl categories, i.e. cadets, for the purposes of collecting data concerning their work when it comes to theoretical preparation;
- Conduct the interview with cadet girl volleyball players for the purposes of determining the theoretical knowledge level;
- Analyzing the obtained results, determine whether theoretical preparation takes place in training procedures of young girl volleyball players;
- If in any case the analysis showed that theoretical preparation was not applied, the reasons for that are to be determined;
- If in any case the analysis showed that theoretical preparation was applied, the procedures and scope used are to be analyzed, and
- The significance of theoretical preparation while training young girl volleyball players according to coaches’ opinion is to be also analyzed.

The hypothesis is that the majority of interviewed coaches when working with cadet volleyball players applies some of the forms of theoretical preparation; that the majority of players possesses certain knowledge on training procedures in volleyball and would like to acquire new ones attending the classes on theoretical preparation. It is also presumed that theoretical preparation procedure is more often used during the practice with cadet volleyball players than aside the practice as well as that the most common reasons for insufficient theoretical preparation when working with cadet volleyball players are insufficient material and technical conditions in a club and inadequate knowledge level of coaching staff.
METHODS

This research falls into the group of pedagogic, i.e. basic researches and is of a transversal character. Scientific-research methods applied here are descriptive and statistical research methods.

Applying descriptive method was caused by the fact that defining goals and tasks of the research was not possible without previous description of analyzed occurrences, as well as without collecting, processing and presenting the data. Comparing and generalization of the obtained results was afterwards performed.

Interviewing techniques were used for data collection. It consists of collecting information (opinions) from interviewees, in writing, using standardized form – interview sheet.

Two interview sheets (questionnaires) were made for the purposes of this research, containing open and closed questions for coaches and players. Both were anonymous, and therefore better sincerity was expected, primarily from coaches when giving the answers to questionnaire.

Interviewees

Interviewees consisted of coaches and cadet girl volleyball players these coaches work with. Cadet age of players refers to players born in 1991 and younger. Interviewed coaches were the ones of cadet players that competed in 2006/2007 season on Belgrade Girl Volleyball Championship, as well as players themselves.

The interviewed coaches are the ones working with girl cadet players from clubs on Belgrade territory in the total number of 20 that were present at the competition (Belgrade Girl Volleyball Championship for cadets). One team competed without competition since the selection that applied for Belgrade Girl Volleyball Championship for cadets was of the age for pre-cadet.

The total number of players was about 200, but only 196 had been interviewed. The number of interviewed coaches, beside the 20 that took part with their teams in the competition, was expanded to 37 to match the sample of players. The other interviewees were the ones that had the experience in working with girl cadet players on Belgrade’s territory.

Research variables

Questionnaires for coaches and cadets consisted of 43 questions divided into two groups (two questionnaires).

The first set of questions (questionnaire) consisted of 25 questions and was given to coaches of a different gender, years at the position, work experience and education. It was composed so to contain nine open and 16 closed questions.

First set of questions referred to obtaining data on social-demographic characteristics of each coach individually. The other set of questions referred to theoretical preparation and whether it was applied by interviewed coaches when working with cadet girl players. The third segment of questions referred to younger categories of girl players and their attitude towards theoretical preparation, as seen by coaches, as well as proposals for possible improvement when it comes to theoretical preparation.

Second set of questions (second questionnaire) consisted of 18 questions. It contained eight open and ten closed questions, and was given to cadet girl players. The questions were constructed so to gather data concerning the use (by coaches) of theoretical preparation during training, as well as to gather the opinion of cadet players and their attitude towards this type of training procedure.

Research procedures

The research procedures were conducted in two ways. The first is filling in the questionnaire by players and their coaches which was taken at the same place. Interviewing was conducted after the practice or after the games taking place at the Belgrade Volleyball Championship for girl cadet players.

Previously arranged with coaches, ten minutes was taken both at the beginning and at the end of the practice, to conduct the interviewing in the gym, dressing room or classroom, depending on time, i.e. available training hours.

The interviewer gave the short introduction about the form and the importance of the research and afterwards instructed on questionnaire filling in procedures which was followed by completing of the same. The questionnaires were simultaneously filled in by the coach and the players. Where spatial properties permitted, the coach and the players were separated so there was no possibility for any cooperation, i.e. consultation or copying when filling in the form.
Results

The results of the research were shown as:

• the analysis of processed data obtained by interviewing coaches,
• the analysis of processed data obtained by interviewing cadet girl volleyball players and
• comparison of the processed data after interviewing both coaches and players.

Due to a better insight every question was shown in the table and afterwards analyzed. The comparison of the answers to questions given both by coaches and cadets was then performed. The questions had the same significance and referred to ways of theoretical preparation.

The conclusion that is made based on the results of the research is that the majority of coaches have the opinion that theoretical preparation is significant for further improvement of cadet girl players. More than a half of interviewed coaches (56.7%) applies both methods of theoretical preparation in their work but not in the same ratio. More often is the theoretical preparation applied during the practice, even 70%, the method applied aside the practice (at specially organized meetings) is applied only by 2.7% of coaches, whereas 19% applies both methods.

The opinion of the coaches concerning the most important subjects that need to be covered during theoretical preparation of cadet players are connected with techniques and tactics of the play itself, life regime of sportsmen, game rules and judging, team play and discipline, sport injuries, psychological subjects and volleyball history. The age to start with theoretical preparation, according to interviewed coaches, is pre-cadet and younger.

Girl cadet players (70.9%) think theoretical preparation “important” for their further sport improvement. The answers given by the players and shown on the Picture 4 clearly show they are mostly interested for the subjects concerning techniques and tactics (70%), then proper nutrition (36.7%), life regime (33%), sport injuries (31.6%), volleyball history (14%) and game rules (10%). Other subjects are more of an educational and informational character with the indirect impact to practical knowledge on volleyball, which caused the players to have less interest in them.
**Picture 1.** Coaches’ opinion on the importance of theoretical preparation for the success during training regimes

![Graph showing coaches' opinion on the importance of theoretical preparation.](image1)

**Picture 2.** Coach opinion on subjects that are to be dealt with in theoretical preparation regime

![Bar chart showing coach opinion on subjects.](image2)

**Picture 3.** The age required for theoretical preparation; coaches’ opinion

![Pie chart showing the age groups for theoretical preparation.](image3)
Comparing the opinions of coaches and players on certain matters concerning theoretical preparation, it was determined that coaches (88.3%) and players (70.9%) consider it to be highly important in training procedures and sport improvement of the players. They also consider it to be interesting (over 50% of both groups of interviewees) and that they gladly take part in its realization.

Unlike previous questions, where the opinion of coaches and players was similar, the answer to whom they would gladly let conduct theoretical preparation, i.e. hear the opinion on the matter, was: the answer "physician" was given by 32.4% of coaches and 11.7% of players, the answer "judges" was given by 27% of coaches and 0.5% of players. The answer "professional player" showed the greatest interest of the players to hear, beside their coach's, the professional players' talk (63.5 %). This is in accordance with the prepositions given by players themselves to hear more about the volleyball from the experiences of coaches and professional players. A certain number (22.1 %) replied they would like to listen to the experiences of a physician (which is in accordance with the answers given to the question: "On which subject would you like to know more?". The answer given to that question was that they would like to know more about nutrition, injuries and life regime in sports). Only 6.3% stated they would like to hear some other coach talk.

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Theoretical preparation while training girl volleyball players

The difference in percentage is evident when it comes to giving an answer “other coach” to the question where 32.4% of coaches gave the positive answer to, whereas only 6.1% of players decided to give the same answer. Even though 56.6% of players think that a coach could make this training procedure more interesting, only small number decided that it could be held by somebody else. Greater similarity in answers was marked when giving the answer “professional player”, where it could be seen that 29.7% of coaches and 33.6% of players have the same opinion.

CONCLUSIONS

The main goal of the research was to determine the scope of conducting theoretical preparation while training cadet girl players, by the means of interviewing coaches and players. The research was conducted by the means of interviewing 37 coaches that have worked with or are still working with cadet girl volleyball players, and 196 cadet girl volleyball players, competing at the Belgrade Volleyball Championship for cadet girl players.

The following conclusions could be made based on theoretical analysis and research results:

1. Besides physical preparation, technique, tactic, psychological and integral preparation, theoretical preparation, is one of the main methods in sportsmen training procedures;
2. “Theoretical preparation is a pedagogic process whose goal is to give knowledge, develop observation, memory and deduction skills on training procedures.” It therefore, has the task to engage sportsmen and help them learn;
3. There is not much data on theoretical preparation when compared to other training procedures that have been much researched (especially physical training). Theoretical preparation is mentioned in written form only when considering other training procedures or as a part of some of the phases in training procedures;
4. Based on the answers given by the coaches concerning their professional background, it could be concluded that the interviewed coaches had satisfactory level of educational background, where even 50% of them had graduated from Faculty of Sport and Physical Educa-
5. Analyzing the processed data, it was noted that 78.3 % of coaches and 70.9 % of players think that theoretical preparation has great influence on the success during training procedures, and thus important for further improvement of the players. According to that, it could be concluded that theoretical preparation is an important element in training procedures which should be often applied;
6. The majority of coaches agree it to be necessary to start with theoretical preparation in pre-cadet (58%) and younger age (36%). Only one coach answered the right time for theoretical preparation is junior age, and one cadet age. The very important datum is that the majority of coaches agrees that it is necessary to start with theoretical preparation even when working with younger age players. Thus is the importance of this training procedure once again confirmed;
7. Coaches use some of the methods of theoretical preparation when working with cadet girl players. The most common one is during the practice (70%), whereas the method aside the practice is considerably less applied (2.7%). Small number of coaches uses both methods of theoretical preparation (19%);
8. The majority of interviewed players possess certain knowledge on training procedures in volleyball and would like to expand it further by theoretical preparation. It primarily refers to techniques and tactics of the play, because it could directly influence the level of practical knowledge and quality of the play.
9. Other subjects that players found interesting and wanted to know more about were: life regime in sport, sport injuries, volleyball history and game rules. More than a half of interviewed players (52.5%) does not wish anybody else to talk about the subjects dealt with during theoretical preparation apart from their coach. 43.8 % would like to hear somebody else talk on certain subjects, and only 2.5 %
would have wanted somebody else to conduct the theoretical preparation. That leads to a conclusion that it is necessary for the coaches to give more effort and improve themselves in order to be able to give the players adequate knowledge and information that would lead to their improvement;

10. The players (63.5 %) showed the great interest in hearing professional players’ experiences. It is in accordance with their suggestion for making this training procedure more interesting, while they suggested more conversation on volleyball with professional players and coaches. A certain number of players (22.1 %) said they would like to hear the physician (which is in accordance with the answer given to the question: “The things you would like to know more about?”). The players answered they would like to know more about nutrition, sport injuries and life regime in sports);

11. Large number of coaches (35.1%) considers that parents should be kept away from the practice. Parents wish to push their children and wish for fast and maximum results is well known (and they very often set aside child’s own opinion, abilities and aspirations). They can thus create awkward situations during the practice or the game, and not only that they are not offering a support then, but rather demoralize their children and interfere with coach’s work. Others (46%) think the parents could help in theoretical preparation but they are rather to be educated on volleyball, nutrition, team spirit, cheering and similar first. The rest think that parents should give support to their children regardless to their achievements and help them with their sport and school activities.

The conclusion that is made based on the results of the research is that theoretical preparation is significant training procedure, especially with young sportsmen, and is important for acquiring the knowledge, developing observational, memory and deduction skills during training procedures. That could help young girl players to better acquire certain knowledge concerning volleyball (and other) and achieve better results at sport competitions.

LITERATURE


