

## *2009 Volleyball Hall of Fame*

# **IVAN BUGAJENKOV**

## **Inducted as a Player**



When men's volleyball took center stage in its Olympic debut in 1964 in Tokyo, Ivan Bugajenkov and the Soviet Union National Team were the main characters. And as it had been for many years leading up to the main event, Bugajenkov and his comrades were the ones standing on the top podium, wearing the gold medals. Bugajenkov would add another Olympic gold medal four years later in Mexico City to his impressive resume.

For Bugajenkov, the road to the gold began in 1958 when he joined the combined USSR National team while still studying at the Latvia State Institute of Physical Education. The Soviet team quickly took center stage as it won at the Games of the Three Continents in Paris in 1959, and emerged as the unofficial champions of the world. The unofficial became official in 1960 however, as Bugajenkov and his Soviet teammates won the FIVB World Championship at Rio de Janeiro. The FIVB World Championship gold medal sent a message to the rest of the world that the Soviet team was for real, but it only served as a preview of a decade on international dominance. In 1962, Bugajenkov won the FIVB World Championships again and then won the FIVB World Cup in Warsaw and the World University Games in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 1963.

The Olympic debut was everything it was expected to be with Bugajenkov earning the first Olympic gold medal, but the Soviet domination did not stop there. In 1965, Bugajenkov added a FIVB World Cup title in Warsaw and another World University Games title at Budapest. In 1967, he won the Gold Medal at the European Championship in Istanbul and a year after he won a second Olympic gold medal at the XIX Olympiad in Mexico City. The Soviet Team also won the Five Continent Tournament in South America.

While a true team player, Bugajenkov earned several individual awards. He was awarded the title "Merited Master of Sports" in the USSR in 1964, and earned the title "International Master of Sports" in 1967. He was also twice awarded the USSR Order of Honour and Certificate of Honour of the Supreme Council of the Latvian SSR. Bugajenkov left the USSR national team in 1970 due to an injury and began working as a volleyball coach and academic professor. He was the Senior Instructor at the Latvia State Institute of Physical Education from 1970-1976, and was the Head of Sport Department, Riga Institute of Civil Aviation Engineers from 1976-1991. He also served as Head Coach of national and junior teams of Iran 1991-2007.