



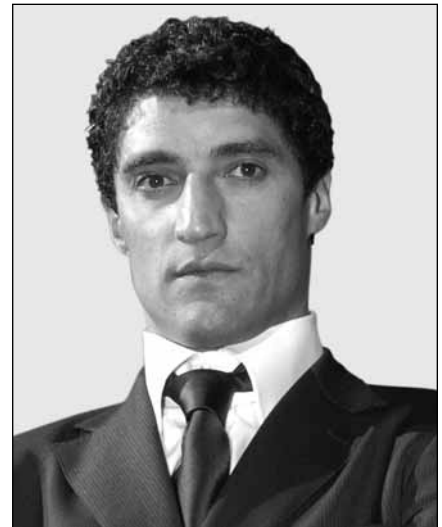
2008 Volleyball Hall of Fame

ANDREA GIANI

Inducted as a Player

In the 1990s, no country in the world dominated the international volleyball scene like the Italian National team. One of the main reasons they did was the dominant play of Andrea Giani.

The son of an Olympic rower, Andrea Giani drew the attention of the two most prominent Italian volleyball clubs, Panini Modena and Santal (later Maxicono) Parma, after beginning his career with the local Sabaudia volleyball club, in Southern Latium. Choosing to join Santal Parma, Giani began with the junior team under coach Gian Paolo. While he lost in his first finals appearance with Parmas in 1987, the titles would mount up quickly. In 1990 he won his first "scudetto" (Shield or badge of the Italian Championships), winning four more in 1992, 1993, 1997 and 2002. Also to his credit were five Italian Trophies (1987, 1990, 1992, 1997, 1998), one Super Italian Cup (1998), two champion League Cups (1997, 1998), two European Confederation of Volleyball (CEV) Cups, (1992, 1995), three Cups of Cups (1988, 1989, 1990), two European Cups (1989, 1990) and one World Champions for Club title (1989).



While the Olympic Gold Medal eluded Giani, he was a rare five-time Olympian. He was the youngest member on the Italian Olympic volleyball team in 1988 and played in the 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004 Olympic Games. He won silver medals at the 1996 and 2004 Olympic Games, and a bronze medal at the 2000 Olympic Games.

When Volleyball Hall of Fame coach Julio Velasco became the Italian National Team coach in 1989, he capitalized on strong, developed talent like Giani and immediately brought the Italian National Team to the forefront of the international stage. As a member of the Italian National Team, Giani won three FIVB World Championships in a row (1990, 1994 and 1998) and four European titles (1993, 1995, 1999, 2003), the 1995 World Cup, the 1993 Grand Champions Cup, and the 1994 SuperFour Cup. The Italians were even more dominant in FIVB World League competition, as they won seven titles between 1990 and 2000, with Giani being named the World League Most Valuable Player in 1994.

During his career, Giani proved his durability. Starting as a middle blocker, he turned into an equally effective power attacker and passer, but he will always be considered one of the best blockers of the 1990s for his ability to stay in the air far longer than the other players. Giani also played in more international matches (474 "caps") wearing the Italian "blue shirt" than any other countryman in any sport. For all his achievements and contributions, Giani was also awarded the Ufficiale Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana (Official Order to the Merit of the Italian Republic) in September 2004 and the Cavaliere Ordine al Merito Della Repubblica Italiana (Knight Order to the Merit of the Italian Republic) in July 2005.

And so we welcome, Andrea Giani as a 2008 Inductee to the Volleyball Hall of Fame.