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U.S. News & World Report

August 11, 1980

**SECTION:** Analysis; Pg. 43

**LENGTH:** 810 words

**HEADLINE:** Olympic Boycott: What It Proved, What It Didn't

**BYLINE:** By ROBERT P. MARTIN, chief of the Moscow bureau

**DATELINE:** MOSCOW

**HIGHLIGHT:**

U.S. and Russia both had hopes of reaping political hay from the games in Moscow. The outcome: A superpower standoff.

**BODY:**

The Moscow **Olympics** turned out to be neither the roaring success sought by the Kremlin nor the disaster that boycotting nations had hoped to inflict on the Soviet Union as punishment for its invasion of Afghanistan.

As the two weeks of competition drew to an August 3 close, the profit and loss columns for the United States and Russia looked like this:

- \* Athletes from Communist countries--especially the Soviet Union and East Germany--dominated competition. Many world records were set, as expected. A plus for Moscow.
- \* The Russians did not win many new friends or admirers with their heavy security measures or their alleged cheating in some events. A debit for the Kremlin, which had hoped to enhance the Soviet image.
- \* The games failed to persuade the non-Communist world to look more kindly on Soviet foreign policy in general or the Afghan invasion in particular. Besides the more than 60 nations that boycotted the

games, 16 countries that did show up refused to march or show their flags in ceremonies. Another setback for Moscow.

\* President Carter's boycott failed either to get the games moved from Moscow or to induce Russia to pull its troops out of Afghanistan. That's a setback for the White House.

\* The press from the Communist world lambasted the U.S. and its boycotting allies for not participating and justifiably praised the Soviets for staging a stupendous athletic spectacle. That was no surprise--and no real gain for either side.

It all adds up to no clear victory for either of the superpowers in using the Olympic Games as a political weapon.

The boycott did damage the Olympic movement. But Olympic supporters doubt that the wound will prove fatal. The Olympics have survived other crises, such as the slaughter of Israeli athletes by Palestinian terrorists in Munich in 1972 and a boycott by African nations of the Montreal games in 1976.

Despite the U.S.-led boycott that kept many of the world's best athletes away, the games cannot be faulted for inferior performances.

More than 30 world records were set. In swimming, there were seven new world and 13 new Olympic marks. Poland's pole vaulter Wladyslaw Kozakiewicz set a world record of 18 feet 11 1/2 inches. East German Gerd Wessig jumped a world-record height of 7 feet 8.8 inches.

Other records undoubtedly would have been broken if such boycotting nations as the U.S., West Germany, Japan and Canada had sent their stars here. Several Americans have exceeded the records that were set in Moscow. Says a British sportswriter: "With the Americans out of the games, a lot of competitors got medals they otherwise would never have had a chance of winning."

Bottom line. The boycott also meant that some athletes at the games performed far below Olympic standards. Many teams were beefed up with inexperienced performers at Soviet urging--and sometimes with Soviet financial aid--to swell the number of entrants.

Examples: Tanzania entered a men's field-hockey team for the first time simply to give Soviet organizers an even number of teams. It gave up a high total of 28 goals in three matches. A bicyclist from Zimbabwe fell off his cycle 10 yards into his first race. A Libyan swimmer finished more than a minute behind the winner in a 400-meter race.

Despite Soviet attempts to pad the entry list, the 5,928 competitors from 81 countries made up the smallest field since the Tokyo games of 1964.

Soviet journalists searched diligently among athletes, coaches and spectators for praise of the Soviet effort--and scorn for the boycotters. They found some of both.

When the U.S. government gave the U.S. Olympic Committee 10 million dollars to develop the American Olympic movement, a commentator for the Soviet news agency Tass said it "demonstrates once again the extent to which the shopkeeper mentality has affected the U.S. politicians who think that money can

buy anything, including sports pride."

West Germany's head of the International Shooting Union was quoted as saying: "During the Olympics, Moscow has turned into a world center of peace, friendship and understanding among peoples."

Moscow was indeed a zone of peace, free of violence or major demonstrations. But there was little chance for friendship or contact between the Soviet people and Western visitors. It was not a typically festive Olympic atmosphere.

#### Communist Runaway

#### Medals won in Moscow Olympics--

	<b>Gold</b>	<b>Silver</b>	<b>Bronze</b>	<b>Total</b>
U.S.S.R.	77	59	46	182
East Germany	43	34	40	117
Bulgaria	6	16	16	38
Hungary	7	9	14	30
Poland	2	13	15	30
Rumania	5	5	12	22
Britain	5	7	8	20
Czechoslovakia	1	3	9	13
Italy	7	3	3	13
France	6	3	3	12
Others	25	29	47	101

Note: Includes events completed through August 1.