

- USA Women's National Team Wins World Volleyball Championships





Purpose

The purpose of this brief document is to evaluate the percentage of points, sets, and matches won by the USA Women's National Team (WNT) at the World Cup of Volleyball in Milan and extrapolate lessons learned.

Results - WNT Captures World Championships

On October 12, 2014 the USA Women National Team did something no other USA women's team has done. They finished 11-2 and won the Volleyball World Championships in Milan, Italy.

First-Round Results

Sept. 23 ... Mexico ... USA wins 19-25, 25-11, 25-20, 25-14
Sept. 24 ... Kazakhstan ... USA wins 25-15, 25-20, 25-22
Sept. 25 ... Netherlands ... USA wins 29-27, 25-21, 25-18
Sept. 27 ... Thailand ... USA wins 25-15, 25-23, 25-20
Sept. 28 ... Russia ... USA wins 34-32, 25-19, 29-31, 26-24

Second-Round Results

Oct. 1 ... Turkey ... USA wins 27-29, 25-19, 25-23, 25-15
Oct. 2 ... Bulgaria ... USA wins 25-17, 25-19, 25-16
Oct. 4 ... Serbia ... USA wins 25-22, 25-20, 25-22
Oct. 5 ... Brazil ... Brazil wins 25-23, 25-22, 25-21

Third-Round Matches

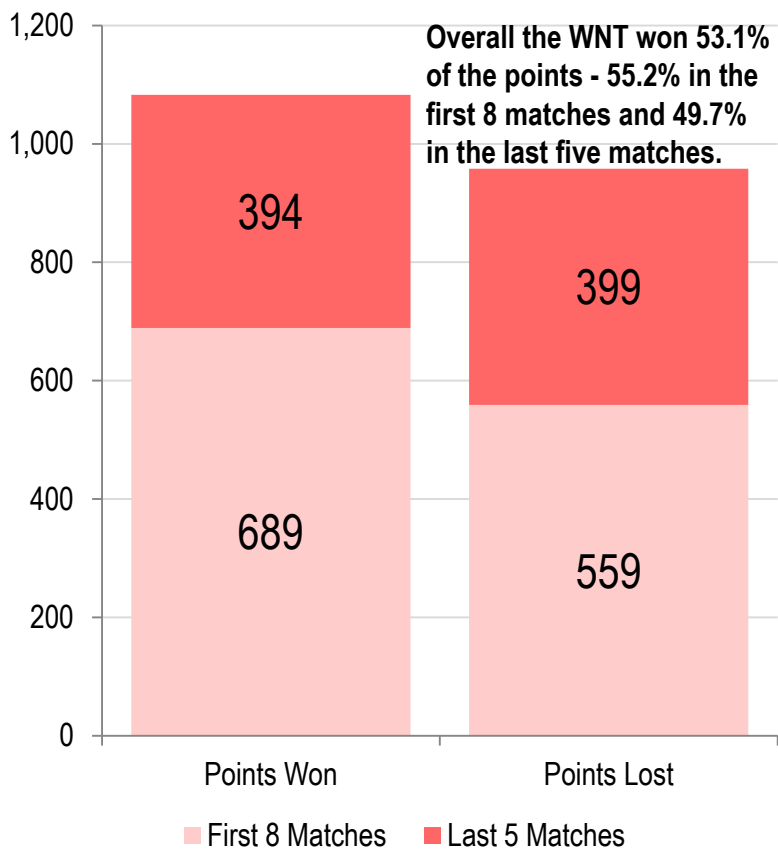
Oct. 8 ... USA vs. Italy ... Italy wins 25-23, 25-22, 25-20
Oct. 9 ... USA vs. Russia ... USA wins 25-19, 25-23, 15-25, 25-23
Oct. 11 ... USA vs. Brazil ... USA wins 28-18, 29-27, 25-20

Gold-Medal Match

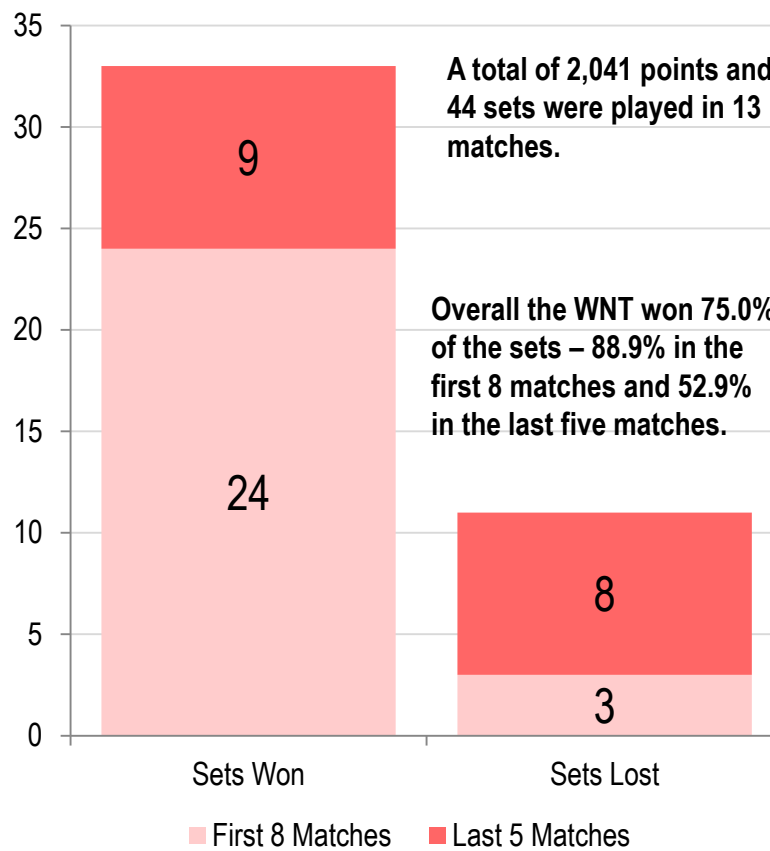
Oct. 12 ... USA vs. China ... USA wins 27-25, 25-20, 16-25, 26-24

Points and Sets Won

Points Won

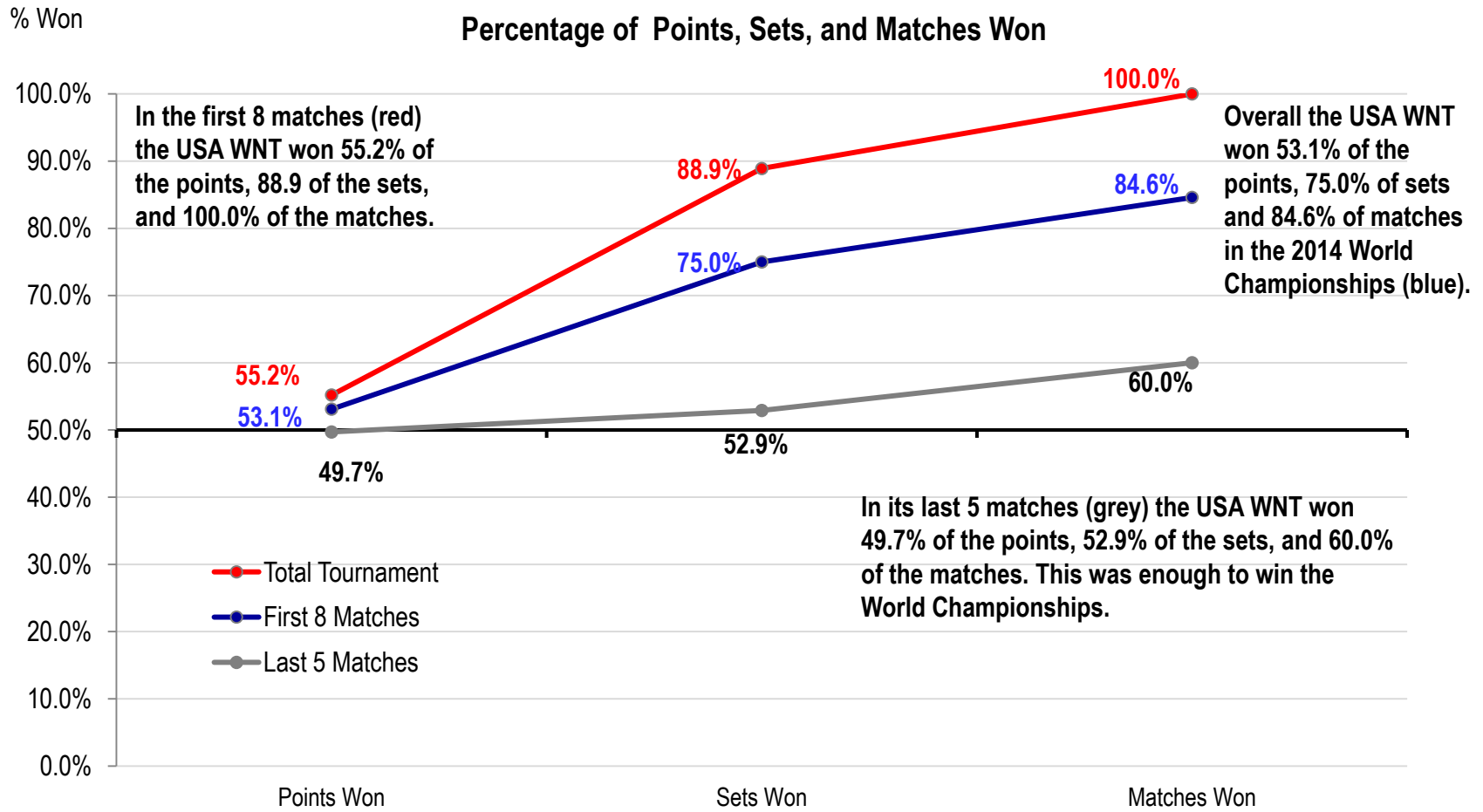


Sets Won



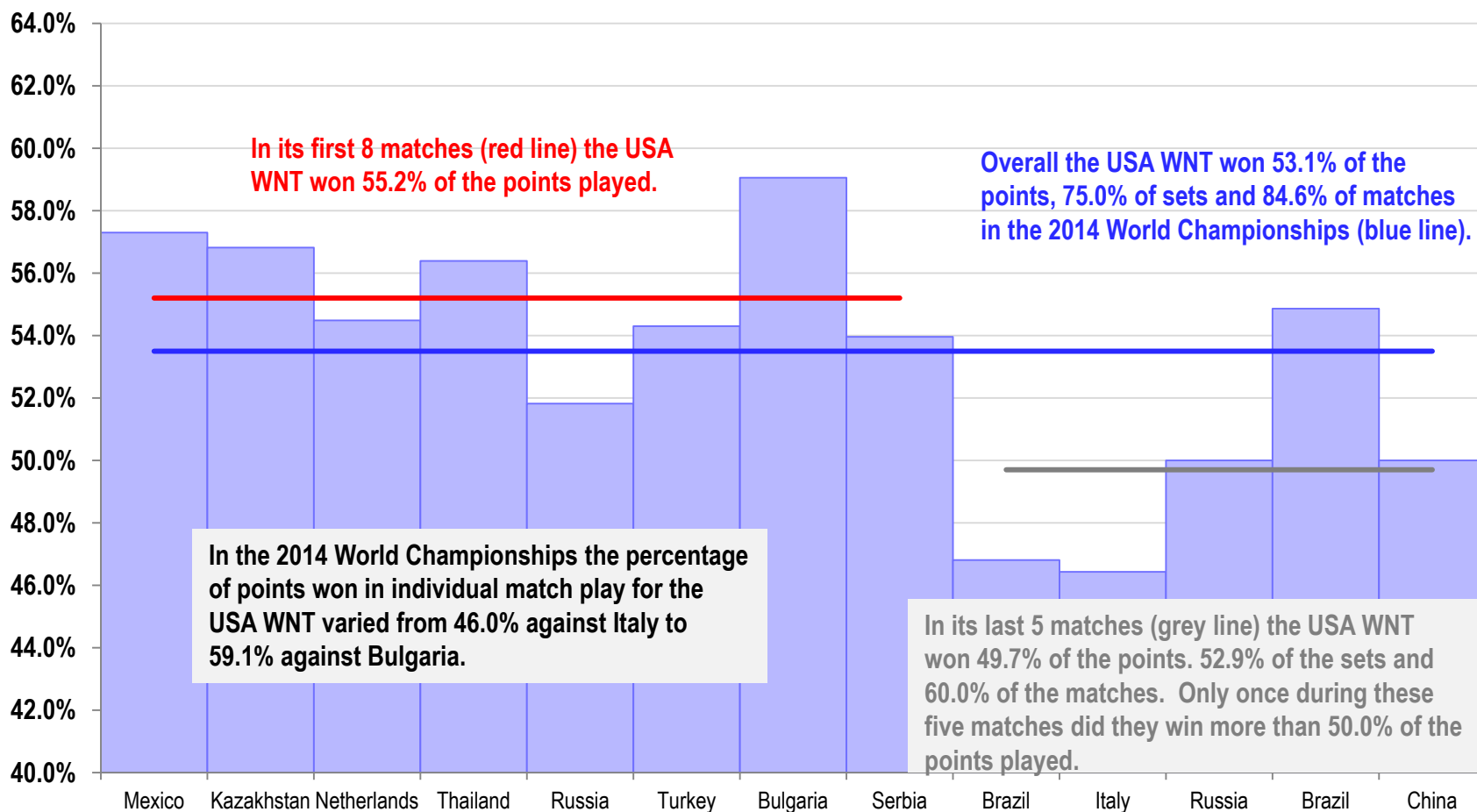
Percentage of Points, Sets, and Matches Won

WNT World Championships (Total, First 8 Matches, Last 5 Matches)



Percentage Points Won by Match

USA WNT 2014 World Championships

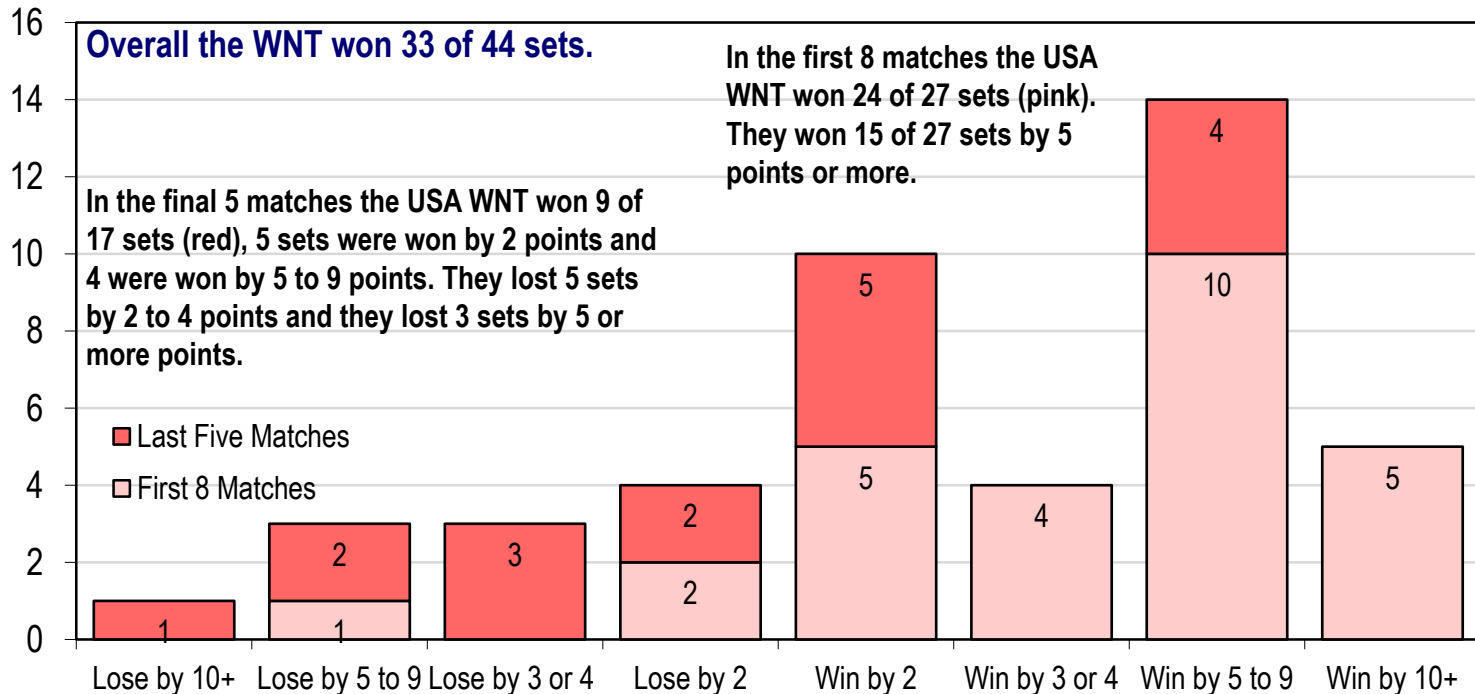


Source: www.flashscore.com

Point Differential in Sets

First Eight Matches vs. Last Five Matches

Number of Sets



Source: www.flashscore.com

10-4

Number of Close Sets Won (2-point difference)

10-4

The USA WNT won a slightly lower percentage of close sets than their overall percentage for sets won.

- During all matches the USA WNT won 10 of 14 sets decided by two points or 71.4% of the close sets.
- The USA WNT won 75% of the total sets played.

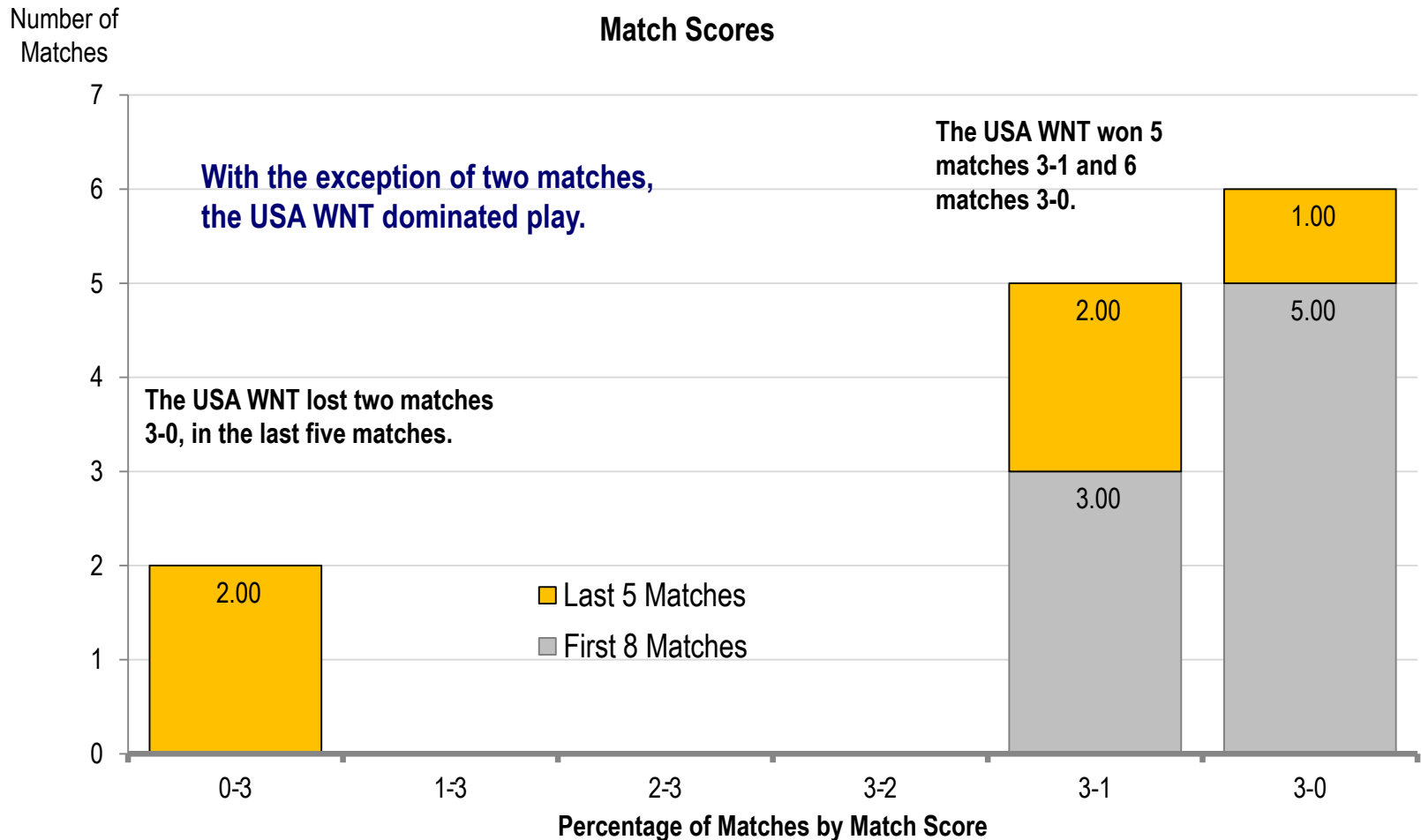
Of the 44 sets, 14 sets, or 31.8% were close sets (decided by two points).

Advantage to Weaker Team

The weaker team has a greater chance of winning close sets than other sets. The moral of the story is that when you are ahead - beat your opponent bad! When you are behind – make it close!

Percentage of Matches by Match Score

USA WNT



Source: www.flashscore.com



Summary

The Results

- Overall - the USA WNT won 53.1% of the points played, 75.0% of sets played and 84.6% of matches played in the 2014 World Championships (blue).
- Early Rounds - In the first 8 matches (red) the USA WNT won 55.2% of the points played, 88.9 of the sets played, and 100.0% of the matches played.
- Late Rounds - In its last 5 matches (grey) the USA WNT won 49.7% of the points played, 52.9% of the sets played, and 60.0% of the matches played. This was enough to win the World Championships.

Lessons

- Champions win slightly more than half the points.
- Every point matters when you are only winning 53.1% of the points.
- Champions play every point as if it is the most important point of the match.
- Champions don't get blown out.
- Champions manage team and player mistakes.
- Pre-tournament coaching makes a difference. About a month prior to the tournament, Coach Kiraly asked several players to replace their heavy topspin serves with jump floaters to increase the percentage of points won on the serve.
- Tournament preparation makes a difference. Because the WNT dominated in early matches they were able to allocate playing time across all the hitters. This allowed their top hitters to be rested for the final matches and opponents had difficulty scouting them.
- Data is part of the planning process for champions.
- Winning the championship was a team effort.

● 2015 World Cup of Volleyball

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Good luck to the Men's and Women's American teams when they compete in the 2015 event in Japan. The women's competition will be from August 22 through September 6. It will be followed by the men's competition from September 8 through September 23.



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This analysis is for informational purposes only. Any opinions or interpretations of data are those of the presenter. As such, they do not represent the viewpoints of any group or particular organization.

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About the Author Gary Horvath is a USAV CAP I level coach. He has coached volleyball primarily in recreation and middle school programs. As well, he is a Master Professional with the United States Professional Tennis Association. He has been recognized for coaching juniors and adults in programs ranging from entry level to highly competitive. In addition, he is a founder of the USA Professional Platform Tennis Association. In that capacity he helped develop the organizational structure, the certification criteria, and testing process for sport's teaching professionals. Horvath is a member of the Wilson Advisory Staff.