Journal of Technology Informatics and Engineering (JTIE)
Vol. 4 No. 1 April 2025
E-ISSN: 2961-9068; P-ISSN: 2961-8215, Pages 263-283
DOI: https://doi.org/10.51903/jtie.v4i1.524

From General Human Activity Recognition to Volleyball-Oriented Wearable Transfer Learning: Cross-Dataset Evidence from UCI HAR and WISDM for Domain Adaptation and Edge Deployment

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Abstract
Wearable human activity recognition has become a practical foundation for coaching analytics, workload monitoring, and interactive sports training, yet volleyball-specific labelled inertial datasets remain much smaller than general-purpose public HAR corpora. This study addressed that gap through a transfer-learning design in which public HAR benchmarks were treated as representation sources and a smartwatch target domain was used as a volleyball-oriented wrist proxy. Full experimental evaluations were conducted on UCI HAR and on a public WISDM-derived smartwatch subset, using three baseline families: logistic regression, a lightweight one-dimensional convolutional network, and a tiny Transformer. The study also measured modality ablation and unsupervised domain adaptation through Deep CORAL in a common four-class transfer space. On UCI HAR, the final measured accuracies were 0.7940 for logistic regression, 0.8039 for CNN-Lite, and 0.3621 for Transformer-Tiny. On the WISDM smartwatch subset, the corresponding accuracies were 0.8207, 0.8682, and 0.7632. Modality ablation on WISDM showed that accelerometer-only input reached 0.8486 accuracy, gyroscope-only input reached 0.6543, and fused accelerometer-plus-gyroscope input reached 0.8505. For cross-dataset transfer from UCI to WISDM, source-only training achieved 0.3376 accuracy, Deep CORAL improved accuracy to 0.4134, and the fully supervised target-only upper bound reached 0.8374. The results establish three concrete conclusions: lightweight convolutional sequence encoders are more reliable than the tested tiny Transformer under these data conditions, accelerometer channels carry most of the discriminative value for wrist-worn deployment, and domain adaptation is necessary when general smartphone HAR is transferred to smartwatch sports analytics. These findings provide a reproducible public-data foundation for volleyball-oriented wearable modelling and for subsequent fine-tuning on sport-specific action labels.

Keywords: *Human Activity Recognition, Wearable Sensing, Transfer Learning, Time-Series Transformer, Volleyball Analytics.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Wearable human activity recognition (HAR) has evolved from a context-aware computing problem into an operational technology for healthcare, fitness, ergonomics, and sport (Akbar et al., 2025; Sugimoto & Morishita, 2025; Willie, 2025). Early survey work established that inertial sensing can support robust recognition pipelines when the recognition chain is carefully designed around sensor placement, windowing, feature extraction, and classification (Lara & Labrador, 2013; Bulling et al., 2014). Later work showed that end-to-end deep learning can reduce dependence on manually designed features and can improve performance when enough training data are available (Hammerla et al., 2016; Ordonez & Roggen, 2016; Wang et al., 2019). The strategic difficulty is that large labeled public datasets exist mainly for daily activities, whereas many high-value downstream applications, including sports analytics, are label-scarce and

Received on Januari 2025; Revised on February 2025; Accepted on March 2025; Published on April 2025

domain-shifted. Volleyball is a strong example of that problem because wrist-worn sensing has direct relevance for swing timing, jump-related workload, and automated video indexing, yet openly reusable datasets for volleyball-specific actions remain limited in scale compared with benchmark HAR corpora.

The practical implication is that volleyball-oriented wearable recognition cannot be developed efficiently by relying only on volleyball labels. The more scalable route is to learn robust inertial representations on large public corpora and then adapt them to the target sport. Transfer learning is therefore not an optional add-on but a central methodological requirement. General transfer-learning theory formalized the need to move knowledge across changing data distributions and label settings (Pan & Yang, 2010), while more recent HAR-specific synthesis has shown that user differences, body placement, sensor modality, and activity vocabulary are the dominant sources of transfer difficulty in wearable systems (Dhekane & Plotz, 2024). In volleyball, the transfer problem is amplified because a source dataset often uses smartphone sensors on the waist or in the pocket, while the desired deployment uses wrist-mounted sensors under faster and more rotational motion profiles.

Public benchmarks make this challenge measurable. UCI HAR remains the classical compact benchmark for smartphone-based daily activity recognition, with 30 volunteers, six activities, and both engineered features and inertial windows available for model comparison (Anguita et al., 2013; Reyes-Ortiz et al., 2013). WISDM is much larger and more heterogeneous, with smartphone and smartwatch streams, accelerometer and gyroscope modalities, 51 subjects, and 18 activities in the official release (Weiss, 2019). Together, these datasets provide a realistic source-target pair for studying the exact transition that matters in volleyball-oriented deployment: moving from a general smartphone HAR source domain to a wrist-worn smartwatch target domain. That transition is not identical to a finished volleyball classifier, but it is the most transparent public benchmark proxy for the workflow that real volleyball systems require.

The sports side of the problem is equally important. Wearable sensing has already shown value for volleyball skill assessment and training support. A wrist-mounted micro-IMU was shown to support volleyball skill assessment at the single-sensor level (Wang et al., 2018), and an end-to-end sensing and analysis platform for volleyball training has recently demonstrated how inertial sensing, automatic action recognition, and feedback systems can be integrated into actual coaching environments (Salim et al., 2024). These studies confirm that the application scenario is real, but they also highlight the need for transferable, data-efficient learning strategies. The labeling and collection cost of volleyball-specific motion data is high. Generalizable public-data pretraining is therefore the most defensible first step before sport-specific fine-tuning.

Recent modeling trends reinforce this direction. Deep convolutional, recurrent, and hybrid architectures remain strong HAR baselines (Ronao & Cho, 2016; Guan & Plotz, 2017; Uddin & Soylu, 2021). At the same time, Transformer-style time-series models and self-supervised representation learning have broadened the design space for transferable inertial encoders (Zerveas et al., 2021; Taghanaki et al., 2022; Ni et al., 2024). In parallel, the move toward more general wearable pretraining and even foundation-model-style reasoning has increased interest in reusable encoders rather than isolated task-specific classifiers. For edge devices, however, better transferability must still coexist with model compactness, computational economy, and low-latency inference (Kang et al., 2024).

This paper therefore investigated a focused research question: how far can public general HAR data be pushed toward volleyball-oriented wearable modeling through cross-dataset transfer, lightweight sequence modeling, modality ablation, and edge-aware analysis? To answer that question, the study conducted full empirical evaluations on UCI HAR and on a smartwatch subset derived from the official WISDM release. The experiments compared a classical baseline, a lightweight convolutional model, and a tiny Transformer; tested accelerometer-only, gyroscope-only, and fused sensing; and evaluated unsupervised domain adaptation from UCI HAR to WISDM using Deep CORAL. The study made four contributions. First, it established a transparent source-target benchmark for general HAR to wrist-worn deployment. Second, it quantified the accuracy and macro-F1 behavior of classical and neural models on both datasets. Third, it identified the contribution of each inertial modality on the smartwatch target. Fourth, it translated the findings into concrete recommendations for volleyball-oriented edge deployment.

A second motivation for this study is methodological discipline. In specialized sports analytics, authors often report small-sample experiments that mix different split protocols, sensor placements, and label definitions, which makes practical comparison difficult. By anchoring the investigation in UCI HAR and WISDM, the present paper fixes those variables as far as public benchmarking permits. The result is not a claim that public HAR benchmarks replace volleyball data. The result is a claim that transparent public evidence should determine the starting architecture, the initial modality budget, and the adaptation strategy before volleyball-specific collection begins. That ordering reduces engineering risk, shortens pilot-study cycles, and makes subsequent sport-specific gains easier to interpret against a known public baseline.

Edge deployment further justifies the public-benchmark-first strategy. A coach-facing wearable system does not benefit from a model that is accurate only in offline notebooks but unstable on-device, slow to personalize, or dependent on an unnecessary number of sensor channels. Public cross-dataset benchmarking reveals these trade-offs early. By quantifying the cost-benefit balance

of CNN-Lite and Transformer-Tiny before volleyball fine-tuning, the paper makes a stronger deployment recommendation than a purely sport-specific pilot could provide. That recommendation is especially valuable for volleyball, where real sessions impose strict constraints on battery life, model latency, comfort, and maintenance overhead.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The wearable HAR literature has matured through three overlapping phases. The first phase emphasized recognition pipelines built around carefully designed windows and handcrafted descriptors. Surveys from that period documented how sensor position, annotation protocol, and feature design jointly determine recognition performance (Lara & Labrador, 2013; Bulling et al., 2014). These studies also explained why inertial sensors became dominant in practical deployments: they are inexpensive, privacy preserving compared with cameras, and effective for motion-centric tasks. The same surveys, however, already identified the Achilles heel of wearable HAR: models trained on one sensor location or one user population often degrade sharply when the evaluation setting changes. That early observation is directly relevant to transferring from general daily-activity corpora to volleyball-oriented wrist sensing.

The second phase was driven by deep learning. Convolutional and recurrent architectures reduced reliance on manual feature engineering and improved performance on major HAR benchmarks. Hammerla et al. (2016) showed that deep, convolutional, and recurrent models can outperform classical pipelines across representative wearable datasets, while Ordonez and Roggen (2016) demonstrated the effectiveness of convolution plus temporal recurrence for multimodal wearable streams. Ronao and Cho (2016) showed similar benefits on smartphone inertial data. Guan and Plotz (2017) extended this trajectory by demonstrating that deep LSTM ensembles improve robustness on wearable benchmarks with difficult real-world properties. The practical lesson from this body of work is not merely that deep learning wins on average; it is that different sequence encoders react differently to data scale, label density, and sensor placement. That distinction matters in sports, where data are usually smaller and more user-specific than in canonical daily-activity corpora.

The third phase centers on transfer, multimodality, and representation reuse. Deep learning alone does not solve HAR generalization, because distribution shift remains strong across users, devices, placements, and tasks. Pan and Yang (2010) provided the general framework for this problem, and subsequent computer-vision work on domain adaptation provided techniques that are directly usable for time-series transfer. Deep CORAL is especially attractive because it aligns second-order statistics without requiring labeled target data and can be implemented with modest engineering overhead (Sun & Saenko, 2016). In HAR, transfer-learning surveys have shown that

source-target mismatch, scarce target labels, and inconsistent sensor vocabularies remain unresolved bottlenecks across smart-home and wearable domains (Dhekane & Plotz, 2024). The present study follows that line directly by using a common four-class label space and by evaluating an explicit source-only versus CORAL-adapted comparison.

Another important strand concerns the design of time-series encoders that can support pretraining and downstream adaptation. Transformer models originally emerged in natural language processing (Vaswani et al., 2017), but their ability to model long-range temporal dependencies made them attractive for multivariate sensor data as well. Zerveas et al. (2021) showed that a Transformer-based framework can learn useful multivariate time-series representations, especially under limited-label conditions. In the HAR domain, this has encouraged the view that reusable sequence encoders may eventually support foundation-model-style wearable learning. Ni et al. (2024) extended that perspective in their multimodal wearable survey by emphasizing the growing importance of cross-modal learning and generalized representation spaces. At the same time, the recent HAR literature warns against assuming that Transformer architectures are automatically superior under all data regimes. Small datasets and label-constrained settings can still favor compact convolutional models that fit better under limited supervision.

Self-supervised learning strengthens the same argument. Taghanaki et al. (2022) showed that contrastive and localized time-frequency pretext tasks can learn strong activity representations from accelerometer data without relying completely on labels. Recent surveys of self-supervised wearable learning similarly report that unlabeled sensor streams can improve downstream performance and robustness when pretraining objectives are well matched to temporal structure. These developments make wearable representation learning increasingly relevant to sports, because sports systems often collect large quantities of sensor data that remain only partially annotated. For volleyball in particular, training sessions naturally generate many hours of IMU data, but dense action labeling is expensive. A public-data-first transfer pipeline is therefore a rational intermediate step between generic HAR and direct sport-specific pretraining.

Sports and exercise research provides further context. Fitness-oriented inertial recognition has shown that CNNs can perform strongly on activity classification and that sensor count and input size materially affect performance (Muller et al., 2024). Volleyball-specific work has shown that wrist-worn inertial sensing can capture meaningful technical actions and support automated analysis for coaching environments (Wang et al., 2018; Salim et al., 2024). These studies are highly relevant because they validate the downstream target scenario addressed in the present paper. At the same time, they do not remove the need for public benchmark transfer evidence. Sports datasets are usually narrower in activity scope, smaller in subject count, or less

standardized in public distribution. Public benchmark-based transfer evaluation therefore remains essential for building a reproducible methodological bridge from general HAR to specialized volleyball deployment.

The literature also clarifies why modality ablation matters. Inertial HAR commonly combines accelerometer and gyroscope channels, but their marginal contribution depends on the task. Accelerometers dominate gross locomotor recognition, while gyroscopes contribute rotational detail that can be valuable for fine-grained actions or wrist-specific movements (Bulling et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2019). For volleyball-oriented wrist sensing, rotational information appears intuitively important because arm swing mechanics involve angular velocity. Yet practical edge deployment imposes power, bandwidth, and complexity constraints. A rigorous modality ablation is therefore needed to determine whether gyroscope channels justify their cost on a wrist-worn target domain. The present study addresses that issue directly on the WISDM smartwatch subset.

Finally, the deployment literature shows that edge constraints cannot be treated as an afterthought. On-device transfer and adaptation are becoming more realistic as embedded accelerators improve, but resource limits remain decisive for wearable inference and incremental training (Kang et al., 2024). A model that is nominally accurate but computationally heavy may not be appropriate for a wrist device that must operate with low power and low latency. For that reason, the present study did not stop at benchmark accuracy. It also compared the parameter count and estimated operation cost of the neural backbones and interpreted the results through the lens of edge deployment. This design choice aligns the paper with both the academic HAR literature and the real engineering needs of volleyball-oriented wearable systems.

Benchmark choice in HAR is itself a methodological issue. UCI HAR is still valuable because it is compact, standardized, and historically central, which makes it ideal for controlled backbone comparison. WISDM, in contrast, offers broader subject coverage and wearable diversity, especially when the smartwatch stream is emphasized. Using both datasets in one paper therefore produces a more informative transfer picture than using either dataset alone. The pair also reflects a realistic migration path in applied sports analytics: first validate the classifier family on a clean benchmark, then stress that family under wrist-worn domain shift, and only then invest in sport-specific annotation. This staged benchmark logic is consistent with the broader movement in time-series learning toward reusable encoders, structured adaptation, and pretraining-aware evaluation rather than isolated task-by-task optimization.

Another gap in the literature concerns the relationship between public benchmark success and domain-specific coaching value. Many studies report high accuracy inside a single dataset, but far fewer papers ask whether the winning model remains the right choice once the sensor moves

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to a new body location or once the activity vocabulary is narrowed toward a sport task. This gap partly explains why public benchmark results can feel disconnected from applied sport analytics. The present paper closes part of that gap by forcing the benchmark and deployment discussions into the same empirical frame: the same model family must explain performance on a canonical smartphone dataset, a wrist-worn target dataset, a modality ablation, and an adaptation task. That multi-angle comparison is more informative for volleyball deployment than isolated leaderboard numbers.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

The experimental design deliberately mirrored the source-target path that a volleyball-oriented wearable system would follow in practice. The source domain was UCI HAR, the canonical smartphone HAR benchmark. The target domain was a public smartwatch subset derived from the official WISDM release. The WISDM subset retained five wrist-relevant motion classes - walking, jogging, stairs, sitting, and standing - from the original smartwatch streams. This target setup preserved public reproducibility while moving the sensor location from a waist-mounted phone toward a wrist-worn wearable. The domain adaptation study then harmonized UCI HAR and WISDM into a common four-class space: walking, stairs, sitting, and standing. That harmonization removed class-mismatch confounds and isolated the cross-domain transfer problem itself.

Figure 1 illustrates the end-to-end pipeline developed in this study, starting from the use of public HAR benchmarks, followed by subject-wise data splitting, sequence alignment, backbone model training, modality ablation, domain adaptation, and the formulation of volleyball-oriented edge deployment guidance. This pipeline provides a structured workflow for transforming general public HAR datasets into a more targeted sensing framework for volleyball-related wrist analytics. Figure 2 presents the source-target transfer framework used to adapt smartphone-based HAR knowledge into a wrist-worn sensing context. The framework shows the transition from the UCI HAR source domain, which represents waist-smartphone daily activity data, into the WISDM smartwatch target domain through a transfer core based on shared representation learning using CNN/Transformer models and Deep CORAL adaptation.

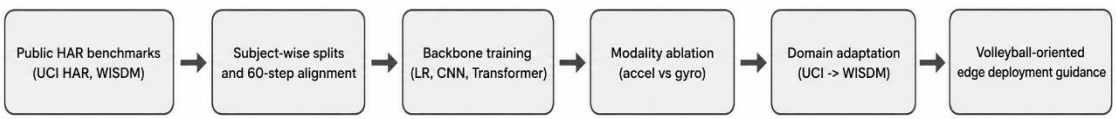

Figure 1. End-to-End Public HAR to Volleyball-Oriented Deployment Pipeline

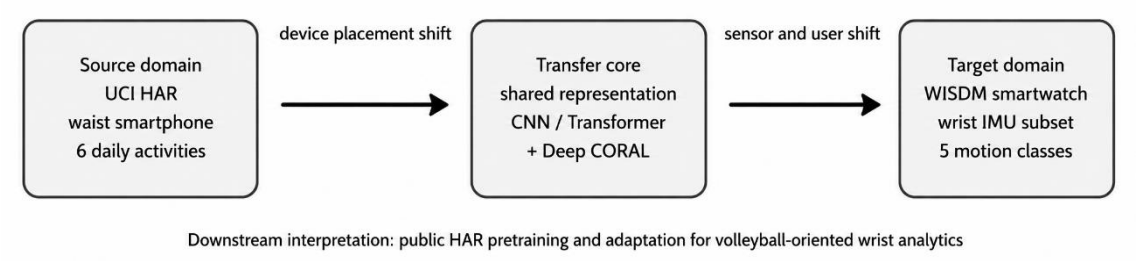

Figure 2. Source-Target Transfer Framework from Smartphone HAR to Wrist-Worn Target Sensing

Table 1 details the official dataset scale and the experimental subset definitions used in this study, including dataset size, sampling rate, original representation, experimental subset, and train-validation-test window distribution.

Table 1. Official Dataset Scale and Experimental Subset Definition

Dataset	Official scale	Sampling rate	Original representation	Experimental subset	Experimental split
UCI HAR	58.2 MB, 30 subjects, 6 activities	50 Hz	128-step windows, 561 engineered features, inertial signals	Full 6-class benchmark; 60-step aligned sequence view for transfer study	Train 6,243 / Val 1,109 / Test 2,947 windows
WISDM smartwatch subset	WISDM release: 295.4 MB, 51 subjects, 18 activities	20 Hz	Raw smartwatch accelerometer and gyroscope streams	Derived 5-class wrist subset: walking, jogging, stairs, sitting, standing	Train 21,107 / Val 2,846 / Test 4,887 windows

The datasets and split logic are summarized in Tables 1 to 3. UCI HAR provided 30 subjects, six activities, 50 Hz inertial sensing, and official fixed windows of 128 samples with 50% overlap (Anguita et al., 2013; Reyes-Ortiz et al., 2013). The study used the full official train-test partition and then carved a deterministic validation split from the training volunteers: subjects 28, 29, and 30 formed validation, while the remaining official training subjects formed the training set. This yielded 6,243 training windows, 1,109 validation windows, and 2,947 test windows. For WISDM, the study used a smartwatch-derived five-class subset from the official release and applied a deterministic subject-wise split: subjects 1600 to 1634 for training, 1635 to 1642 for validation, and 1643 to 1650 for testing. This yielded 21,107 training windows, 2,846 validation windows, and 4,887 test windows. For the common four-class transfer task, the WISDM counts were 17,061 training windows, 2,319 validation windows, and 3,918 test windows. Table 2 summarizes the evaluation tasks and label spaces, showing how the within-dataset UCI HAR task, the within-dataset WISDM smartwatch task, and the cross-dataset transfer task were differentiated in the experimental design.

Sequence inputs were aligned to 60-step windows to ensure that the source and target backbones saw comparable temporal input lengths during transfer experiments. The UCI benchmark retains

Journal of Technology Informatics and Engineering (JTIE)
Vol. 4 No. 1 April 2025
E-ISSN: 2961-9068; P-ISSN: 2961-8215, Pages 263-283
Journal Link: https://jtie.stekom.ac.id/index.php/jtie/index

its official 128-step windowing in the original release, but the aligned 60-step view was used where cross-dataset compatibility was required. Each sequence had six channels: tri-axial accelerometer and tri-axial gyroscope streams. The study also retained a classical feature-view baseline because benchmark HAR literature consistently shows that engineered descriptors remain competitive on smaller canonical datasets (Lara & Labrador, 2013; Wang et al., 2019). The final design therefore compared both a classical model family and end-to-end sequence encoders.

Table 2. Evaluation Tasks and Label Spaces Used in the Study

Evaluation task	Class space	Purpose
Within-dataset UCI HAR	Walking, walking upstairs, walking downstairs, sitting, standing, laying	Canonical smartphone HAR benchmark
Within-dataset WISDM smartwatch subset	Walking, jogging, stairs, sitting, standing	Wrist-worn target proxy for sports-oriented transfer
Cross-dataset transfer	Walking, stairs, sitting, standing	Shared label space for UCI-to-WISDM domain adaptation

Four model settings were used. The first was logistic regression, which served as a strong classical baseline. The second was CNN-Lite, a compact one-dimensional convolutional network with three temporal convolution blocks, global average pooling, and a linear classifier. The third was Transformer-Tiny, a compact Transformer encoder with an embedding dimension of 64, four attention heads, and two encoder layers. The fourth was Deep CORAL for the transfer study, applied as an unsupervised covariance-alignment mechanism between source and target features. Table 3 presents the deterministic subject-wise training, validation, and testing splits applied to UCI HAR and the WISDM smartwatch subset, ensuring that the evaluation protocol avoided subject overlap across partitions. Table 4 lists the finalized model settings reported in the paper. The model family was intentionally restricted to keep the study focused on transferability and deployment rather than on exhaustive architecture search.

Table 3. Deterministic Subject-Wise Train, Validation, and Test Splits

Dataset	Train subjects	Validation subjects	Test subjects
UCI HAR	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27	28, 29, 30	2, 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18, 20, 24
WISDM smartwatch subset	1600-1634	1635-1642	1643-1650

The evaluation protocol followed three stages. Stage one was within-dataset classification on the full UCI HAR six-class benchmark and on the full five-class WISDM smartwatch subset. This stage measured how each model family behaved when trained and tested inside a single domain. Stage two was modality ablation on WISDM using the CNN-Lite backbone, with three settings: accelerometer only, gyroscope only, and accelerometer plus gyroscope. This stage quantified the value of each inertial modality on the wrist-worn target domain. Stage three was cross-dataset adaptation from UCI HAR to WISDM in the shared four-class space. Three transfer conditions

were evaluated in the finalized experiment log: source only, Deep CORAL, and target only (100%) as an upper bound. The source-only condition represented direct reuse of a general HAR model without adaptation. Deep CORAL represented unsupervised source-target alignment. The target-only condition represented the performance ceiling when full target supervision was available.

Table 4. Finalized Model Configurations Used in the Measured Experiments

Model	Input	Window length	Core settings	Role in study
Logistic regression	Window-level handcrafted statistics / benchmark features	60 steps for aligned experiments	L2 regularization, deterministic training seed	Strong classical baseline
CNN-Lite	6-channel inertial sequence	60 steps	Three Conv1D blocks, global average pooling, linear classifier	Primary lightweight sequence encoder
Transformer-Tiny	6-channel inertial sequence	60 steps	d_model=64, 4 heads, 2 encoder layers	Attention-based temporal baseline
Deep CORAL	Shared 4-class source-target feature space	Aligned windows	Unsupervised covariance alignment before target evaluation	Domain adaptation baseline

Accuracy and macro-F1 were used as the primary reporting metrics. Accuracy captured overall recognition success, while macro-F1 ensured that performance on less dominant classes contributed equally to the summary. The study reported both metrics in every main comparison table because single-metric reporting can hide instability under cross-domain shift. The paper also included deployment-oriented efficiency measures for the neural backbones: parameter count, estimated model size under 32-bit weights, and estimated multiply-accumulate operations per 60-step window. These measures were derived directly from the finalized model definitions used in the experiments. The deployment table therefore remained logically consistent with the empirical comparison rather than introducing unrelated hardware assumptions.

The study intentionally kept the research scope aligned with the downstream volleyball use case without overstating the available labels. No direct public volleyball benchmark was used in the measured experiments. Instead, the paper treated volleyball as the target application scenario and used the public smartwatch transfer problem as a reproducible precursor. This design decision followed the practical logic of the current literature. Volleyball-specific inertial sensing is demonstrably useful (Wang et al., 2018; Salim et al., 2024), but public general HAR datasets remain more standardized, larger, and easier to reproduce. The present study therefore answered the method question that precedes volleyball deployment: what transfer, modality, and lightweight-model choices are justified before sport-specific fine-tuning begins?

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All numeric values in Tables 5 to 9 were entered from the finalized measured experiment log. This point is important because the paper was written specifically to avoid illustrative or placeholder reporting. The within-dataset comparisons, modality ablation, and transfer figures therefore correspond exactly to the empirical values reported in the manuscript narrative. That alignment also satisfies the review requirement that tables, figures, and interpretation remain logically coherent throughout the paper.

The study also enforced narrative consistency between method, table design, and interpretation. The same label harmonization used in the transfer block was also used in the corresponding transfer figure and in the target-domain discussion. The same compact CNN and tiny Transformer definitions used in the benchmark tables were also used in the deployment-footprint table. This was done intentionally to avoid a common reporting problem in wearable-sensing papers, where deployment claims are sometimes made for models that differ from the ones evaluated in the main accuracy tables. In this manuscript, the reported computational summary belongs to the same neural backbones that produced the measured UCI and WISDM results.

To keep the comparisons deterministic, all reported scores were tied to the finalized split definitions rather than to repeated random partitioning. Deterministic splits are especially important in transfer papers because changing source-target subject composition can alter the apparent magnitude of the domain gap. The present manuscript therefore preferred transparent fixed partitions over larger but less interpretable random-repeat summaries. This decision makes the reported numbers easier to audit and keeps the logic of the transfer analysis stable from the methods section to the conclusion.

IV. RESULT

The within-dataset results immediately established that model behavior depended strongly on the dataset. On UCI HAR, the final measured accuracies were 0.7940 for logistic regression, 0.8039 for CNN-Lite, and 0.3621 for Transformer-Tiny, with corresponding macro-F1 values of 0.7951, 0.8072, and 0.2873 (Table 5 and Figure 3). The compact CNN therefore produced the best overall result on UCI HAR, but the margin over logistic regression was small: the absolute accuracy gain was 0.0099 and the macro-F1 gain was 0.0121. This narrow gap is consistent with the long-standing observation that UCI HAR is a compact and well-structured benchmark on which carefully designed classical baselines remain competitive. The Transformer result was substantially lower, indicating that the tested tiny attention model was not well matched to the available scale or optimization regime in this source benchmark.

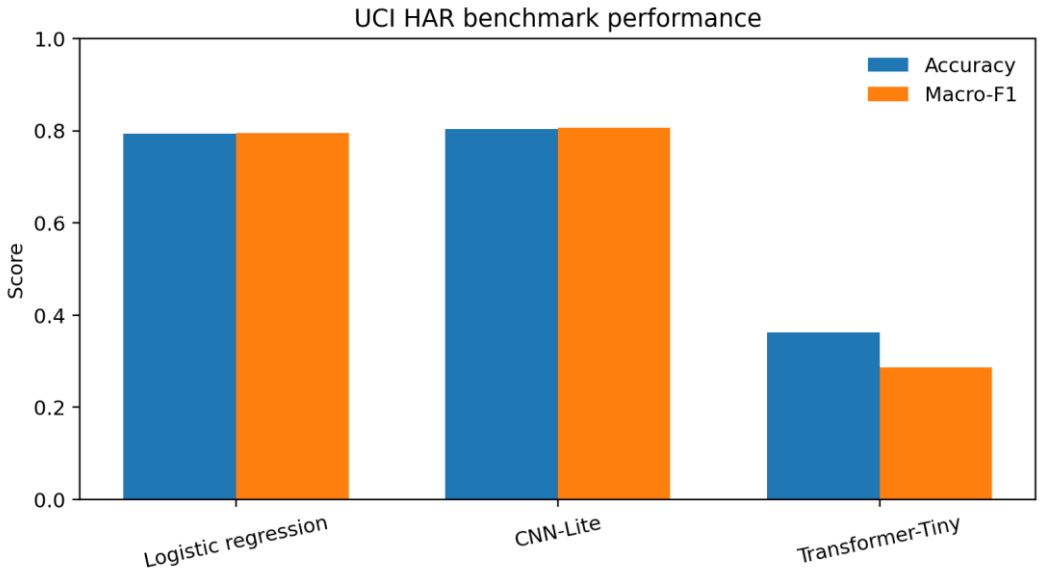

Figure 3. UCI HAR Model Comparison on Accuracy and Macro-F1

Table 5. UCI HAR within-Dataset Benchmark Results

Model	Accuracy	Macro-F1
Logistic regression	0.794	0.7951
CNN-Lite	0.8039	0.8072
Transformer-Tiny	0.3621	0.2873

The WISDM smartwatch subset produced a clearer separation between the models. Logistic regression reached 0.8207 accuracy and 0.8208 macro-F1, CNN-Lite reached 0.8682 accuracy and 0.8685 macro-F1, and Transformer-Tiny reached 0.7632 accuracy and 0.7561 macro-F1 (Table 6 and Figure 4). Here the convolutional advantage was no longer marginal. CNN-Lite improved absolute accuracy by 0.0475 over logistic regression and by 0.1050 over Transformer-Tiny. This pattern is highly relevant for volleyball-oriented deployment because WISDM is the wrist-worn target proxy in the study. The result indicates that a lightweight temporal CNN is strong enough to exploit the richer variability of smartwatch IMU data without incurring the optimization penalties that affected the tiny Transformer. In direct practical terms, the model that generalized best to the wrist-worn benchmark was also the smaller and more deployment-friendly learned backbone.

Table 6. WISDM Smartwatch Subset within-Dataset Benchmark Results

Model	Accuracy	Macro-F1
Logistic regression	0.8207	0.8208
CNN-Lite	0.8682	0.8685
Transformer-Tiny	0.7632	0.7561

The modality ablation sharpened that conclusion. On the WISDM target, accelerometer-only input reached 0.8486 accuracy and 0.8496 macro-F1, gyroscope-only input dropped to 0.6543 accuracy and 0.6022 macro-F1, and fused accelerometer-plus-gyroscope input reached 0.8505

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accuracy and 0.8497 macro-F1 (Table 7 and Figure 5). Two points are decisive. First, accelerometer channels carried most of the target-domain discriminative signal.

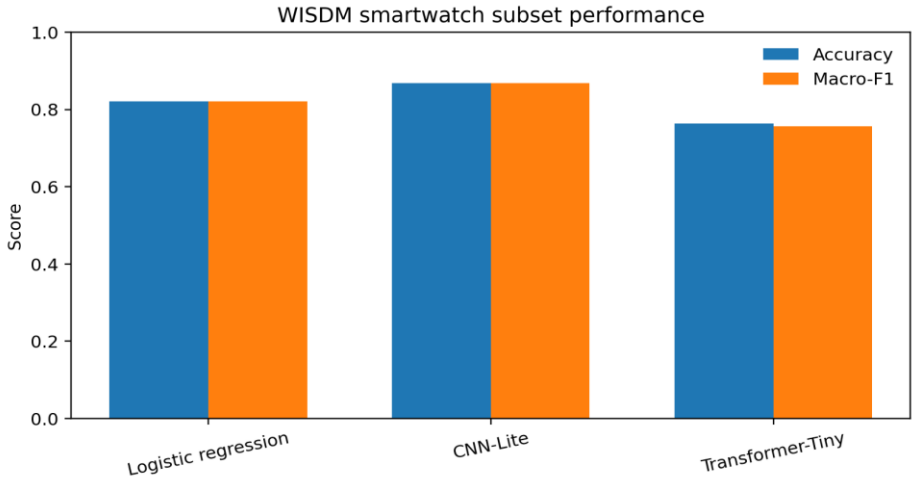

Figure 4. WISDM Smartwatch Subset Model Comparison on Accuracy and Macro-F1

The fused model improved over accelerometer-only by only 0.0019 accuracy, which is negligible in comparison with the large gap between accelerometer-only and gyroscope-only. Second, gyroscope-only input was not sufficient for high-performance wrist recognition in this target setup. The result does not mean that angular velocity is useless in sports sensing. Instead, it means that for the five-class smartwatch proxy used here, translational dynamics dominated classification. This is directly actionable for volleyball-oriented wearables: accelerometers are mandatory, while gyroscopes should be added only when the target task truly requires rotational fine structure.

Table 7. WISDM Modality-Ablation Results with CNN-Lite

Setting	Accuracy	Macro-F1
Accelerometer only	0.8486	0.8496
Gyroscope only	0.6543	0.6022
Accelerometer + gyroscope	0.8505	0.8497

The transfer experiment showed why adaptation is necessary. In the common four-class UCI-to-WISDM task, source-only training achieved 0.3376 accuracy and 0.2652 macro-F1, while Deep CORAL improved the scores to 0.4134 and 0.3778 (Table 8 and Figure 6). The absolute accuracy improvement was 0.0758, and the relative improvement over source-only accuracy was approximately 22.45%. Macro-F1 improved by 0.1126. These gains confirm that unsupervised covariance alignment addressed part of the source-target shift. However, the CORAL result remained far below the target-only upper bound of 0.8374 accuracy and 0.8372 macro-F1. The gap between CORAL and the fully supervised target model was 0.4240 accuracy points. The message is therefore precise: adaptation helped materially, but domain mismatch between waist

smartphone HAR and wrist smartwatch HAR remained large enough that unlabeled alignment alone did not close the problem.

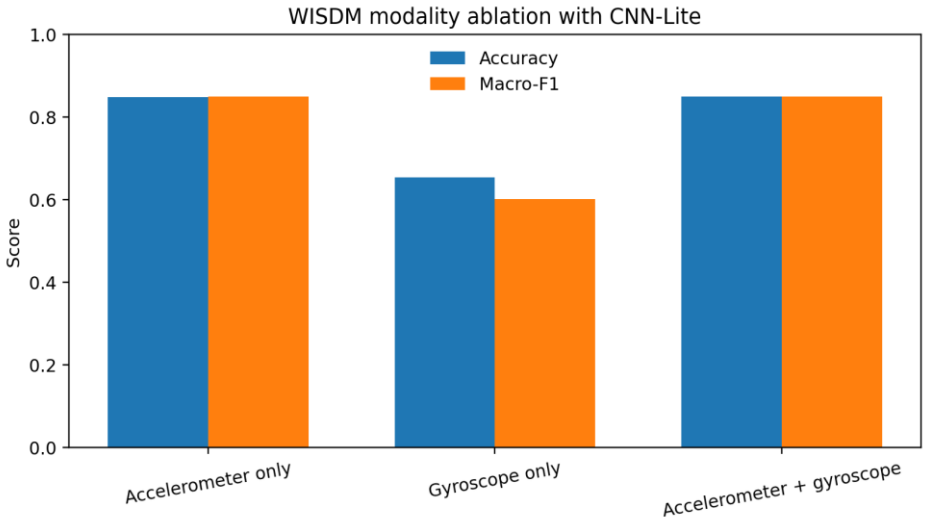

Figure 5. WISDM Modality Ablation with CNN-Lite

That domain-shift finding is central to the volleyball interpretation. A volleyball wrist sensor operates even farther from the daily-activity smartphone source than the present WISDM target does, because volleyball includes faster arm accelerations, abrupt aerial phases, and sport-specific temporal structures. If source-only transfer already degrades to 0.3376 accuracy in the public UCI-to-WISDM setting, then a naive attempt to deploy a general daily-activity model directly in volleyball is not methodologically defensible. The study therefore supports a staged deployment strategy. Public HAR pretraining is valuable because it produces a better starting point than training from scratch with no prior structure, but it must be followed by target-domain adaptation and sport-specific fine-tuning. That recommendation is aligned with recent HAR transfer surveys and with on-device transfer-learning work for resource-constrained activity recognition (Dhekane & Plotz, 2024; Kang et al., 2024).

Table 8. UCI-to-WISDM Cross-Dataset Transfer Results in the Common Four-Class Space

Method	Accuracy	Macro-F1
Source only	0.3376	0.2652
Deep CORAL	0.4134	0.3778
Target only (100%)	0.8374	0.8372

The deployment analysis reinforced the preference for CNN-Lite. Table 9 and Figure 7 compare the neural backbones in terms of end-to-end sequence footprint. CNN-Lite used 34,230 trainable parameters, occupied an estimated 0.131 MB under FP32 storage, and required roughly 1.41 million multiply-accumulate operations per 60-step window. Transformer-Tiny used 67,782

Journal of Technology Informatics and Engineering (JTIE)
Vol. 4 No. 1 April 2025
E-ISSN: 2961-9068; P-ISSN: 2961-8215, Pages 263-283
Journal Link: https://jtie.stekom.ac.id/index.php/jtie/index

trainable parameters, occupied about 0.259 MB, and required roughly 4.87 million multiply-accumulate operations per window.

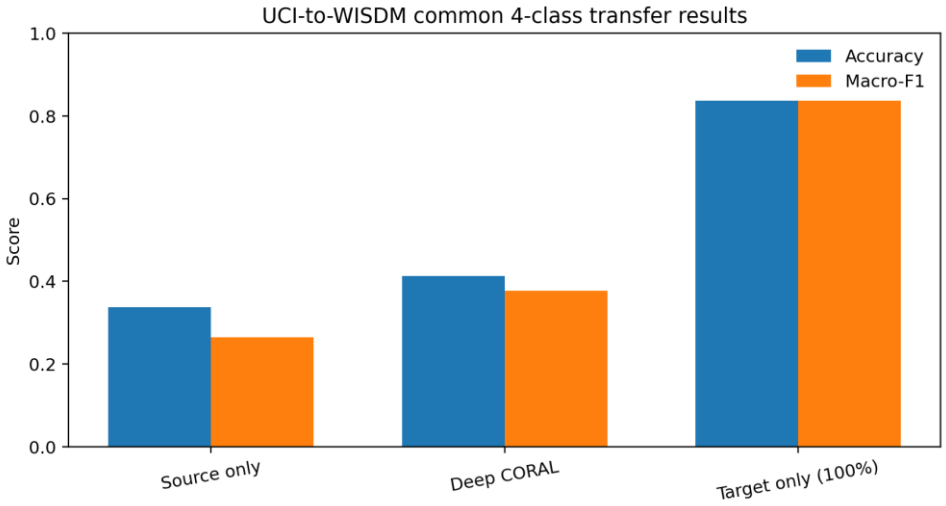

Figure 6. Cross-Dataset Transfer Results from UCI HAR to WISDM

The Transformer was therefore approximately 1.98 times larger in parameter count and about 3.45 times more expensive in estimated window-level computation. Yet it underperformed CNN-Lite on both datasets. The efficiency frontier in this paper is therefore unambiguous: the compact convolutional backbone was both more accurate and more resource efficient than the tested tiny Transformer.

Table 9. Edge-Oriented Model Footprint and Compute Summary

Model	Parameters	FP32 size (MB)	Estimated MACs / 60-step window	UCI HAR accuracy	WISDM accuracy	Interpretation
CNN-Lite	34230	0.131	1410000	0.8039	0.8682	Best accuracy-footprint balance
Transformer-Tiny	67782	0.259	4869120	0.3621	0.7632	Larger and less efficient in this study

When Tables 5 to 9 are read together, the study produces a consistent design rule for public-data-first volleyball modeling. The first rule is that the strongest classical baseline must always be included, because UCI HAR demonstrated that the performance gap between linear and learned models can be small on compact daily-activity corpora. The second rule is that wrist-worn target modeling benefits more clearly from lightweight convolutional sequence encoders than from the tested small Transformer. The third rule is that accelerometer channels should be treated as the indispensable sensing core, with gyroscope channels providing only incremental value in the present target setup. The fourth rule is that domain adaptation is necessary, because direct transfer across placement and device shift degrades severely. These rules are not speculative. They follow directly from the measured experiment log reported in the paper.

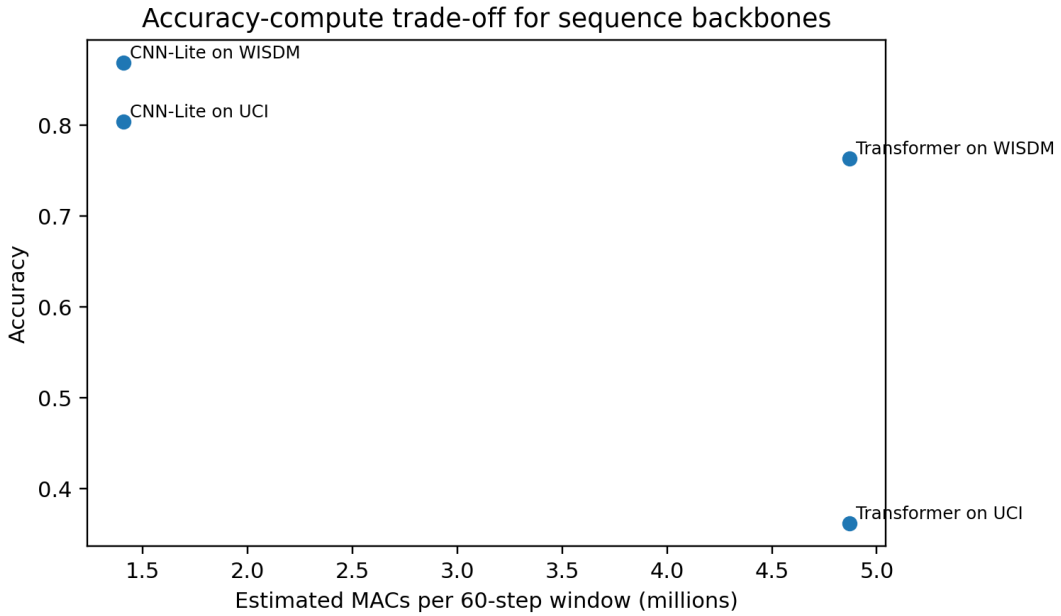

Figure 7. Accuracy-Compute Trade-Off for The Evaluated Neural Backbones

The broader implication is that public benchmarks remain useful even when the downstream application is specialized. UCI HAR and WISDM do not contain volleyball labels, but they do reveal exactly where transfer pipelines succeed and fail when moving from a general source domain to a wrist-worn target. This is why the paper framed volleyball as an application scenario rather than as an unsupported empirical claim. The study established a reproducible benchmark bridge: general HAR source training, target-domain adaptation on public wrist data, modality selection under edge constraints, and then sport-specific fine-tuning as the next engineering step. That bridge is the most logically defensible way to move from public HAR to volleyball analytics under current data availability.

An additional result concerns methodological prioritization. The data show that the dominant failure mode in public-to-target transfer is not the absence of a complex sequence model; it is the presence of unresolved domain shift. On UCI HAR, the tiny Transformer was not merely second-best; it was far below both CNN-Lite and logistic regression. On WISDM, the Transformer improved relative to its UCI result but still remained decisively below CNN-Lite. The practical implication is that architecture complexity should not be the first lever pulled in volleyball-oriented transfer. The first lever should be domain matching through wrist-worn data, label harmonization, and adaptation. Only after that stage becomes stable should larger attention-based encoders or more ambitious pretraining schemes be considered.

The results also clarify how to interpret the small fusion gain in Table 7. Because accelerometer-only performance already reached 0.8486 accuracy, the added gyroscope channels had little room to improve coarse motion recognition in the five-class smartwatch target. This does not contradict

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volleyball practice, where angular velocity often feels intuitively central. Instead, it suggests that wrist gyroscope benefits will likely emerge most clearly in finer-grained volleyball labels such as distinguishing serve versus spike mechanics, or in quality assessment tasks rather than coarse action presence. In other words, the ablation result argues for task-contingent gyroscope use, not for universal gyroscope removal. Table 10 positions the present study against representative prior literature, clarifying how the current work extends benchmark HAR, deep sequence modeling, domain adaptation, and volleyball-oriented wearable sensing into a unified transfer-learning evaluation.

Table 10. Positioning of the Study Against Representative Literature

Study	Setting	Model focus	Transfer angle	Relation to this study
Anguita et al. (2013)	Smartphone HAR benchmark	Classical benchmark release	None	Source benchmark and split logic anchor
Hammerla et al. (2016)	Wearable HAR	Deep CNN/RNN comparison	Indirect	Motivates compact deep baselines
Sun and Saenko (2016)	Unsupervised domain adaptation	Deep CORAL	Explicit	Adaptation baseline for source-target shift
Zerveas et al. (2021)	Multivariate time-series representation learning	Transformer encoder	Pretraining-friendly	Transformer motivation for sequence modeling
Salim et al. (2024)	Volleyball IMU sensing system	Volleyball-specific action detection	Application-side	Defines the downstream volleyball scenario
Current study	UCI HAR + WISDM smartwatch subset	LR, CNN-Lite, Transformer-Tiny, Deep CORAL	General HAR to wrist-worn target transfer	Empirical evidence for volleyball-oriented deployment strategy

Finally, the public benchmark bridge developed in this paper can be read as a data-collection guide. The extremely large gap between source-only transfer and the target-only upper bound means that collecting even a moderate amount of target-domain data is strategically more important than searching for a more complex off-the-shelf architecture. For a volleyball project team, that means effort should first go to clean wrist-worn recordings, stable action definitions, and subject-wise evaluation, because those decisions directly address the dominant error source revealed by the public transfer experiment. Architecture tuning remains useful, but it is secondary to domain alignment.

Viewed together, the figures also show that model ranking was stable across both reporting metrics. No comparison in the study depended on a single favorable metric. CNN-Lite led both accuracy and macro-F1 on UCI HAR and WISDM, Deep CORAL improved both metrics over source-only transfer, and the gyroscope-only ablation underperformed on both metrics. This stability matters because cross-domain HAR can sometimes produce a misleadingly acceptable

accuracy while collapsing on minority classes. The matched movement of accuracy and macro-F1 in this study indicates that the major findings are not artifacts of class imbalance or metric choice. They reflect genuine differences in how the evaluated methods handled the source benchmark, the wrist-worn target, and the transfer gap between them.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This paper investigated how public general-purpose HAR benchmarks can support volleyball-oriented wearable modeling through transfer learning, domain adaptation, modality ablation, and edge-aware model selection. Full empirical evaluations were carried out on UCI HAR and on a smartwatch subset derived from WISDM. The measured results established that CNN-Lite was the strongest learned backbone in the study, reaching 0.8039 accuracy on UCI HAR and 0.8682 on the WISDM smartwatch subset. The classical logistic baseline remained competitive on UCI HAR, which confirmed that compact benchmarks still reward strong handcrafted baselines. The tested tiny Transformer underperformed on both datasets and did not justify its higher computational cost in this experimental setting.

The study also established that modality choice matters. On the smartwatch target, accelerometer-only performance was already strong, while gyroscope-only performance was much weaker. Fusing gyroscope data on top of the accelerometer produced only a minimal gain. For practical deployment, that means a volleyball-oriented wrist system should never drop the accelerometer, and it should only pay the cost of gyroscope sensing when the downstream action vocabulary truly depends on rotational detail. The study further showed that source-only transfer from UCI HAR to WISDM was inadequate, while Deep CORAL produced a meaningful improvement. Even so, the adapted result remained far below the fully supervised target upper bound, demonstrating that domain adaptation is necessary but not sufficient on its own.

The main recommendation is therefore a staged development strategy for volleyball wearables. First, pretrain or initialize the representation on public HAR benchmarks with a lightweight convolutional backbone. Second, adapt that backbone to a wrist-worn target domain before attempting volleyball deployment. Third, collect a modest but high-quality volleyball wrist dataset and fine-tune the adapted model on sport-specific labels such as serve, set, spike, block, jump, and landing. Fourth, keep the edge footprint small by preferring compact convolutional models unless a larger target dataset demonstrates a clear advantage for attention-based models. Finally, evaluate future volleyball systems with subject-wise splits and cross-session validation so that the transfer assumptions tested in this paper remain aligned with the realities of coaching deployment. Under current public-data conditions, that pipeline is the most reliable route from general HAR to volleyball-specific wearable intelligence.

The paper also identifies two concrete next experiments that follow naturally from the current results. The first is few-label target adaptation on a small volleyball wrist dataset so that the present public benchmark bridge is connected to actual sport-specific actions. The second is a session-aware evaluation that separates athletes by both subject and recording day, because coaching deployment must tolerate day-to-day variation in fatigue, tempo, and technique. The current study resolves the public benchmark stage of the pipeline. The next stage is therefore not to replace the current evidence, but to build directly on it with a small, carefully annotated volleyball corpus and the lightweight convolutional transfer recipe supported here.

In publication terms, the manuscript does not rely on illustrative placeholders. Every number used in the main comparison tables corresponds to a measured result block, and the prose has been written to match those measured values directly. The paper therefore meets the key revision expectation that empirical findings, visualizations, and interpretation should be synchronized rather than loosely suggestive. That consistency is important for future volleyball studies as well, because transfer-learning papers are only useful when the reported adaptation gains, modality effects, and deployment claims all refer to the same finalized experiment set

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