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The gold tax

WRITTEN BY ZAC GADSBY

LAST WEEK THE POSTPONED 2020 OLYMPIC GAMES CONCLUDED, AND WITH THAT, NEW ZEALAND HAD ITS MOST SUCCESSFUL MEDAL HAUL IN ITS HISTORY. TWENTY MEDALS, SEVEN GOLD, SIX SILVER AND SEVEN BRONZE, LEFT NEW ZEALAND 13TH ON THE MEDAL TALLY, IMPROVING ON THE EIGHTEEN MEDALS COLLECTED AT THE 2016 RIO DE JANEIRO GAMES. THE SUCCESS IS A HUGE CREDIT TO THE CALIBRE OF NEW ZEALAND ATHLETES AND COACHES, ESPECIALLY WITH THE UNCERTAINTY AND DELAYS DUE TO COVID-19. HOWEVER, WHAT IS THE COST OF THESE ATHLETES TO NEW ZEALAND, AND ULTIMATELY IS THE COST WORTH IT?

New Zealanders have been competing in the Olympic Games since 1908, when we joined Australia as the Australasian team and won our first gold. It wasn't until the post-war years of 1920 when New Zealand entered the games under its own flag. Since 1908, New Zealand have won 140 medals; 53 gold, 34 silver and 53 bronze.

Highlights of this history include the 1984 Los Angeles Games, where NZ finished 8th on the medal table with 11 medals, including 8 golds. This was followed up with a total of 13 medals at the 1988 Seoul Games.

Two and half decades later, the 2012

London Games saw NZ hauled another 13 medals, including 6 gold, and then improved on this again at the Rio Games with 18 medals.

Putting this altogether leaves New Zealand 25th on the all-time Olympic medal table, an incredible feat for a country with the 126th largest population in the world. Per capita, NZ are 5th in the same medal table, showing that NZ truly does punch above its weight in the Olympics.

All of these medals beg the question of how we quantify the value of medals and the cost of each medal to New Zealand and its taxpayers.

Looking back to 2008, NZ brought home 8 medals after a relatively mediocre Games hosted in Beijing. Government spending showed that more than \$80 million was spent in the four years leading up to the Games and worked out to cost \$10 million per medal won. As this was right in the middle of the Global Financial Crisis, questions were asked of Sports Minister Clayton Cosgrove, who replied that the spending was absolutely justified and that it isn't about the medal count, but rather the encouragement of participation in sport that leads to better health outcomes in society.

University of Otago professor Steve

Jackson disputes this, however and says that there is no objective evidence that investment in elite sports leads to greater participation rates in the population. So why is there so much money spent on the Games every cycle? It appears that national pride fuels the rationale behind this and that as such a small country, NZ takes immense pleasure in watching its sportspersons outperform bigger and better-funded countries.

Moving to Rio 2016, more than \$158 million was spent on elite sport in the four-year cycle leading up to the Games, and this proved to be successful, with NZ bringing home 18 medals. At the time, this was NZ's most fruitful Games.

Averaging this spending, each medal cost about \$8.8 million. This was a cheaper cost per medal than the Beijing Games, and clearly the increased investment in elite sport led to better-prepared athletes and a better overall outcome in Rio.

Moving to Tokyo 2020, the bottom line is still to come in, but it is expected more than \$250 million will have been spent in the years leading up to the Games. It is worth noting that the Covid-19 delay meant taking on another year worth of costs that probably would have been allocated towards the 2024 Paris Games. NZ broke its 2016 record and came home with 20 medals at an average cost of \$12.5 million.

Before making any opinions on the sums of money spent by the Government on the Olympics, it is worth comparing this to other sports in NZ. The All Blacks don't receive any funding publically and

are instead made to rely on sponsors, endorsements, ticket sales and broadcasting rights through its parent NZ Rugby. This is largely the same as New Zealand's premier men's cricket team, the Blackcaps.

On the other hand, the sports of cricket and rugby union are much more popular, marketable and have regular seasons which pull spectators in from around the world. The TV audience for the 2019 Canoe Sprint World Championships that Lisa Carrington won would not have compared to those of the 2019 Rugby World Cup or Cricket World Cup.

NZ's Olympians are often individuals and have excelled in niche sports that do not have the same roots in NZ culture as rugby or cricket. This means they need funding to succeed. For example, there are not big TV and sponsorship deals for equestrian sports, yet Mark Todd is recognised as one of New Zealand's premier Olympians with back-to-back gold medals. He would have never had the tools to win without funding from the NZ Government. NZ prides itself on its ability to win a David vs Goliath battle, and without funding for these niche sports, there wouldn't even be a fight.

In today's day and age, success lies in being a full-time athlete and having the training and development to maximise one's performance on the world stage. The quadrennial Olympic Games is the pinnacle for these athletes, and denying them the chance to

represent their country because of a lack of funding wouldn't reflect well on NZ's attitudes towards national identity. I, for one, am happy to see taxpayer money spent on building the success of New Zealand athletes. Let's hope we see even more bang for our buck in Paris 2024.



Investing in physical vs mental fitness

WRITTEN BY ISSIE DEKKER

WE WATCH THE OLYMPIC GAMES TO SEE THE BEST OF THE BEST. ATHLETES WHO HAVE THROWN THEMSELVES INTO YEARS OF PHYSICALLY GRUELLING TRAINING TO LIFT HEAVIER WEIGHTS, SWIM FASTER, JUMP HIGHER AND FURTHER THAN ANYONE EVER BEFORE. WITH 27 WORLD RECORDS BROKEN IN RIO IN 2016 AND 23 WORLD RECORDS BROKEN OVER SEVEN SPORTS AT THE TOKYO OLYMPICS, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT ATHLETES ARE IN PEAK PHYSICAL CONDITION. WHAT HAPPENS THEN WHEN THE BEST ATHLETES ARE NOT IN PEAK MENTAL SPACE? FOR US ON THE COUCH AT HOME, IT MEANS WONDERING WHAT TO WATCH INSTEAD. FOR SPONSORS, IT MEANS REACTING TO THEIR ATHLETE INVESTMENTS FORFEITING MEDALS AND REDUCING POTENTIAL BRAND EXPOSURE.

Widely considered one of the top gymnasts in the world right now, Simone Biles famously scratched herself from the team event, the individual vault and uneven bar events at the 2020 Olympics. Biles's statements on her social media confirmed her withdrawal was not due to physical injury but rather her mental health. While this jeopardised Biles's chance to repeat her Olympic all-round title, she went home with two medals. Earlier this year, the seven-time Olympic medallist signed with sponsor Athleta, the activewear line of clothing giant Gap, over endorsing Nike due to Athleta's commitment to supporting women

and diversity in sport. Athleta's chief brand officer Kyle Andrew praised Biles's decision to prioritise her mental health, stating, "We stand by Simone and support her well-being both in and out of the competition". Sponsor Visa expressed similar support, saying Biles made "a difficult, but incredibly brave decision" and "is able to inspire both on and off the mat".

Naomi Osaka's sponsors had equivalent responses to the number two female tennis player in the world's decision to pull out of the French Open in May this year. Nike and Mastercard (competitors

of Athleta and Visa) conveyed their admiration of Osaka's courage to "prioritise personal health and well-being" and "address important issues, both on and off the court". Osaka withdrew from the competition after facing a fine for boycotting the obligatory press conference due to her anxiety about speaking to the media.

2021 has been the year of growth in acceptance of mental health. The reaction of major sponsors Athleta, Nike, Visa and Mastercard signal the start of a new era where athlete endorsements are no longer focused purely on physical ability. What began as an





investment in the strongest bodies now means supporting the emotions that are part of them. Ultimately, these sponsors are better with the endorsements from athletes that prioritise their mental health over their sport. Both women are influential over many other women and role models of future athletes. With many young girls looking to match Biles's 31-strong medal collection while wearing the same Athleta activewear, the loss of Biles's endorsement is too risky.

Nike's advertisement featuring Colin Kaepernick kneeling during the national anthem at a football game to protest social injustice and police brutality in 2018 is a clear display of evolving sponsorships. Despite many protestors taking to social media to burn their Nike gear, Nike experienced a surge in sales. This aligns with the outrage Nike faced over their policies on pregnant athletes in 2019. Three female Olympic track and field athletes broke their non-disclosure agreements to shine a light on Nike cutting 30% of their pay when they became pregnant. After public outcry, Nike fixed athlete contracts to secure pay and bonuses for 18 months around pregnancy.

While the world becomes more comfortable and open talking about mental health, athletes are no exception. What customers want to see is these sponsors caring for their endorsers. Sponsorship is no longer about winning medals or breaking records; it is about the athlete as a whole. As much as they seem like superhumans in their chosen sport, people know they are human beings like the rest of us, struggling through lockdowns and

political uncertainty. Athleta, Nike, Visa and Mastercard must consider more than the top runners and gymnasts when deciding on sponsorships. Both Osaka and Biles are women of colour, and the Black Lives Matter movement rising on top of women's rights and mental health must be considered when investing in sponsorships. Sponsors need to tread lightly to ensure their image remains favoured by both athletes and the public.

As role models to many, the athletes competing in the Olympics and other international events hold massive sway over sponsors' returns. Big brands in the sporting community need to keep their feet both on the court and off it.

Olympics in Auckland

WRITTEN BY LUKA BORICH

CAN NEW ZEALAND HOST THE OLYMPIC GAMES? THEORETICALLY, YES. PRAGMATICALLY, NOT A CHANCE. BUT SOME OF US LIVE IN AUCKLAND, AND HERE PRAGMATISM RARELY FACTORS INTO PUBLIC POLICY. DON'T BLAME US; IT'S PROBABLY HEREDITARY.

The major hurdle is the budget. The \$22 billion price tag that Tokyo swallowed is at least one zero too many. For context, that would be 44% of Budget2020, which details the country's entire fiscal spending for the year. Even accounting for the \$3.9 billion in COVID delays, there is no path to hosting without cutting down on the budget. So where can we save some money?

Let's start with what we do have. Namely, Auckland Airport. It is our star, our hub, our *crème de la crème* and probably our only true asset in our bid for Auckland to host the Olympics. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) normally give about 8 years for cities to prepare, and the expansion plans should be complete within that timeframe.

So it can be assumed that we could handle over 11,000 athletes from over 200 countries getting into and out of the country. Bold assumption? Maybe, but work with

me here. The next bar we must clear is where they will be housed. The IOC requires at least 40,000 hotel rooms for tourist spectators. As of August 2019, this would be about an eighth of the hotel capacity in Auckland. However, the Olympic Village needs an isolated capacity for at least 15,000 athletes, referees, officials, and coaches. This is the first big-ticket item we will need to build. The Village in Tokyo cost north of \$1.3b.

West Wave in Henderson was built for the 1990 Commonwealth Games and can be used again. All diving and swimming events would likely take place here. The pool is big enough, and the diving board tall enough. In Tokyo, there were 35 events in the pool. And before you say it, I am aware we are asking a lot of West Wave.

We have an aquatics centre. The other significant cornerstone of the Olympics: an athletics stadium. To call Mt Smart a stadium is a loose

use of the term, but beggars can't be choosers. Discuss, high jump, long jump, triple jump, sprints; you name it, Mt Smart can host it. If it sounds like a logistical nightmare, that is because it undoubtedly is. But again, you've got to work with me here.

Eden Park is a world-class venue in its own right. Any field sport can be played there. Spark Arena can host all of the combat disciplines, plus lifting. Indoor ball sports can be played in the Trust stadium with a few minor million-dollar upgrades to the facility. Remember, people, we are saving money!

Our second big-ticket item would be a gymnastics stadium. Tokyo invested nearly \$4.6b, which seems marginally beyond our budget. But frankly, Waitakere YMCA will not cut the mustard, so we would likely have to draw the line here and swallow the bill.

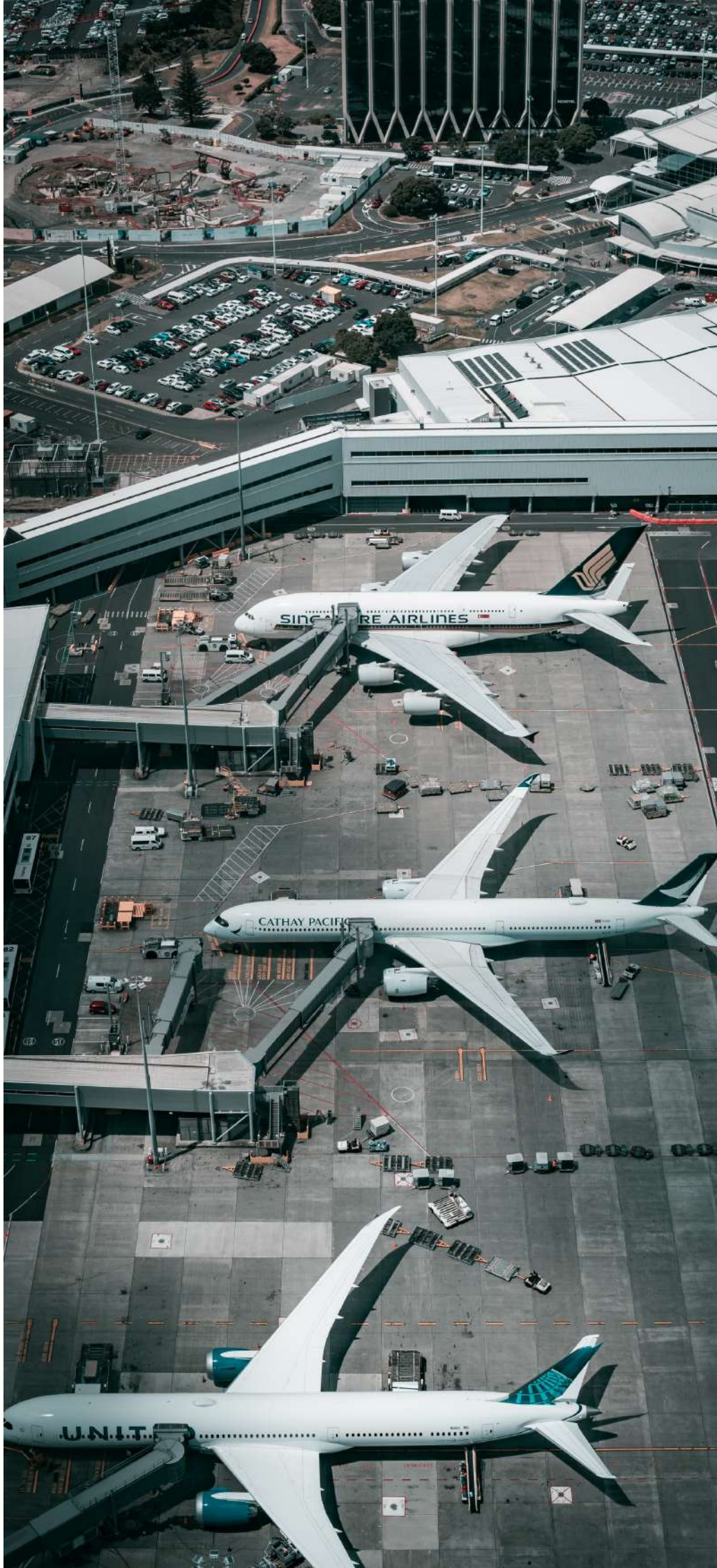
ASB Tennis Arena is equipped to



handle its namesake. As is Avantirome, which is the home of New Zealand cycling and only a short -checks notes – 90 minute drive from where our Village would be built. Venues being that far spread out would be a first for the Olympics, but that’s not necessarily a bad thing. Cyclists could use the distance as a warmup ride.

I have undoubtedly neglected some sports. We’ve hosted rowing and sailing before, so that needn’t be an issue. 28 years of the Weetabix triathlon has prepared us for the ‘thlon’ events. Golf is more of a hobby than a sport anyway.

All of this is to say that Auckland cannot foreseeably host the Games, which is to say that New Zealand cannot either. The Olympics are too expensive. If there is anything to learn from this exercise, it is that exactly this. We are a small-time country, on a small-size budget, competing against the economic giants of the world. Not that it matters; we’ve never needed hometown advantage to punch above our weight anyway.





Welcome to your new home

WRITTEN BY ROHIT RAJAGOPAL

AS DUSK FALLS OVER THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN, IT IS SAFE TO SAY THE TOKYO SUMMER OLYMPICS MADE FOR A UNIQUE SPECTACLE AND TELEVISED GOLD. WITH BILLIONS Poured INTO INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS, FACILITIES AROUND THE CITY WILL FORM PART OF THE LEGACY LEFT BEHIND. SPECIFICALLY, A FLURRY OF CONSTRUCTION WENT INTO BUILDING THE OLYMPIC VILLAGE TO ACCOMMODATE ATHLETES, WITH THE ADDED PRESSURE OF IMPRESSING THE REST OF THE WORLD. HOWEVER, IT POSES THE QUESTION: ARE THESE VENUES FINANCIALLY VIABLE AND BENEFICIAL TO THE HOST CITY?

For two inspiring weeks every four years, the world shifts its focus to the Summer Olympics. As much as the games are for the athletes, the host city is often burdened with delivering a glamorous experience. To justify the rising expenditure of each edition, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) have urged games organisers to demonstrate the long-term value for money coupled with addressing the "legacy question".

As such, venues are built on the basis that they can be retrofitted and reused. The villages are an integral part of this and, if done correctly, can revitalise a particular part of town. If done poorly however, the city will be left with white elephants in the form of

abandoned and rundown facilities.

[Tokyo 2020](#)

Japan's reputation for being one of the most resourceful and technically advanced nations was put on display through its Olympics infrastructure. The Athletes' Village, set in the heart of the prestigious Harumi waterfront district, takes up 33 acres and currently contains 3,600 apartments which housed over 11,000 competitors. The organisers plan to build two 50-storey residential skyscrapers to produce an additional 2,050 rooms and eventually seek to sell these to Tokyoites. This will amount to nearly a third of the city's new apartment supply, although there

are concerns that there will be insufficient demand.

At an estimated \$2 billion cost, the village utilised cardboard beds to promote sustainable practices. This caused a meltdown on social media, claiming it was a tactic to discourage intimacy amidst the pandemic. Subsequently, Rowan Moore of The Observer claimed, "On top of the podium for drab design is the Olympic Village, an ensemble of generic global apartment blocks, grey and gridded". With such criticism, it isn't hard to imagine why host cities find it so hard to strike the right balance between practicality and opulence.

[Follow the Leader](#)

Evidently, Tokyo has taken inspiration from previous games to future-proof its venues and create a long-lasting legacy. Despite this, not all cities have managed to thrive after the closing ceremony. Many boards around the world have become warier in bidding for hosting rights, whilst some have suggested they might never host again.

The Winners

The East Village built for the 2012 London Games was converted into 3,000 new homes along with restaurants, shops, and schools fitted into one-time use Olympic venues. These homes have been on sale, with 2-bedroom flats currently on offer for above \$1 million. The city has widely been credited for stimulating the economy and providing housing options to its locals.

Similarly, the Munich edition held in 1972 and Atlanta in 1996 both transformed their villages to serve as residences to accommodate university students. The apartments in Munich are now the city's second-largest student housing development, whilst Georgia Tech oversees the units in Atlanta.

Nevertheless, the Winter Olympics have also seen several large-scale renovations, with the village in Sochi repurposed into scenic resorts at the base of ski mountains. The Vancouver Games placed 1,100 flats on the market and converted buildings into bars and eateries to encourage local businesses.

The Losers

Conversely, the Rio Olympics has

infamously become an example of what not to do. The \$700 million village was proposed to be remodelled into luxury condos, but only 7% of the 3,600 apartments have been sold to date. Likewise, the Olympic Park and the Maracana Stadium are largely abandoned and have been labelled as a "ghost town".

Athens 2004 is described in a similar vein, with many facilities left defaced with graffiti and underused despite the country facing record unemployment, homelessness, and poverty. Due to the extreme financial burden, such events have caused other nations such as Hungary (2024) to pull out of Olympic bids. The 2032 Summer Olympics only received a single bid from Brisbane, who were recently awarded the games.

In addition, London balanced out its Olympic Village success by forking out £700 million to transform the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park into the home ground for Premier League side West Ham United. Unfortunately, this process was more expensive than retrofitting Wembley stadium with a track and athletics field. This was clearly an error made by the organisers who could have manipulated their existing resources instead of indulging in new ones.

The Future of Development

As it stands, the cost of hosting the games will continue to rise, with each edition attempting to outdo the last one. However, with targets such as the 2050 net-zero carbon emissions in place, it is crucial that host cities consider sustainable methods. London 2012 taught us

important lessons: create for the future and retrofit to Olympic needs. Adapting existing buildings would lead to a substantial decrease in resources and a lower upfront investment.

A classic example of this was reusing the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens (rebuilt for the first modern Olympics in 1896) for the archery and marathon events in 2004. Rio 2016 and Sydney 2000 also modified their existing infrastructure to house various indoor and outdoor competitions.

Above all, the development of Olympic venues can bring life to industrial areas and boost the host city's image. It would seem prudent to establish the Olympic Park in the heart of the city, which is easily accessible to local businesses and residents well after the games end. In turn, increased public transport usage provides the opportunity to expand existing infrastructure and optimise operations.

Overall, clearly outlining the life cycle of Olympic facilities, particularly villages, is a crucial factor in determining what type of legacy is forged by a host city. Tokyo became the first games to incorporate renewable bedding materials and set a precedent for environmentally friendly solutions. With Paris hosting the next edition and planning to accelerate regional development, one hopes the city will be able to follow suit and set a new benchmark.



The glamorisation of countries

WRITTEN BY ANISTON INGER-HOLLAND

WHEN MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ARE WATCHING, IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT COUNTRIES WANT TO PUT ON THEIR BEST FACE. WITH EACH OLYMPIC GAMES COMES BIGGER AND BETTER FACILITIES, COSTING TAXPAYERS BILLIONS OF DOLLARS. FOR THE TOKYO 2020 SUMMER GAMES, THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT SPENT NZD 30 BILLION, AFTER AN INITIAL FORECAST OF \$11 BILLION. HOWEVER, IT IS NOT UNCOMMON FOR A HOST NATION TO INCUR A LARGE LOSS RATHER THAN A PROFIT - SO WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF HOSTING? IT DIFFERS PER COUNTRY, BUT FOR MANY, IT IS AN ATTEMPT TO DISPLAY THEIR PROGRESS ON THE WORLD STAGE.

For the hefty price tag of \$30 billion, the Japanese Government built twenty-three venues, including an aquatics centre, gymnasium and an equestrian park. There was also the Olympic Village, built to temporarily accommodate over 11,000 athletes for the seventeen-day period of the Olympics. The Village alone cost an estimated \$2 billion to build, and the apartments are planned to be sold for upwards of \$2 million each after the games. However, with the likes of Rio de Janeiro, many host cities fail to upkeep these facilities post-games, and they remain empty. After all, the facilities are custom built for the Olympics and cannot be utilised for smaller-scale sporting events. Olympic villages

also go to waste as, despite plans to sell apartments, many remain empty, as was the case in Rio. It's uncertain whether Tokyo will suffer the same fate but the pure economic loss caused largely in part by the pandemic is eye-watering. It would be almost impossible to recoup these losses.

The initial projected revenue for the games was just below \$10 billion, which included \$3 billion from transportation, meals, hotels and merchandise, as well as nearly \$1 billion from ticket sales. However, Tokyo was selected for the 2020 Olympics in 2013. A time where the pandemic was incomprehensible and crowds were expected to fill up

the streets of Japan. Thus, the loss has been steeper than expected. It's not the first time a country hasn't turned a profit hosting the Olympics. In 2008, the games in Beijing cost an eye-watering \$60 billion and generated revenue of nearly \$5.3 billion.

[So why even host the Olympics?](#)

There are many reasons why a country, despite the heavy economic burden, may want to host the Olympics. The prestige of hosting the Olympics brings many benefits to the host nation. It gives the host nation an opportunity to display its best features to the rest of the world. This is valuable for

countries such as China, Russia and Brazil, where political woes have typically savaged their reputations. For these types of countries, hosting brings a favourable light and the ability to convey progress to the rest of the world - even if it's not inherently true. It also has benefits for the long-term economy, regardless of the countries' reputation. The tourism industry thrives during the Olympics as billions of dollars are spent on accommodation, hospitality, transportation and tourist attractions.

These benefits mean that countries will go to significant effort to make their games the best. Whilst this makes sense, it is often disturbing when compared to the socio-economic status of its people. For example, Brazil's poverty rate was nearly 20% in 2019 after rising steadily from 2014. It also ranks in the top 10 countries with the highest crime rate.

The Brazilian Government attempted to glamorise the country by throwing billions into the games to hide the socio-economic status of Brazil. There were reports that the facilities of the Olympic Village itself were "unlivable" with major plumbing and electrical hazards. The organisers noted that there were isolated events of sabotage during construction, which raises the concern that not even Brazil's own people, those who were provided jobs by constructing the facilities, were impressed by Brazil's decision to host.

This would not be the case in many other countries where hosting the games is exciting and where day-to-day infrastructure for citizens is

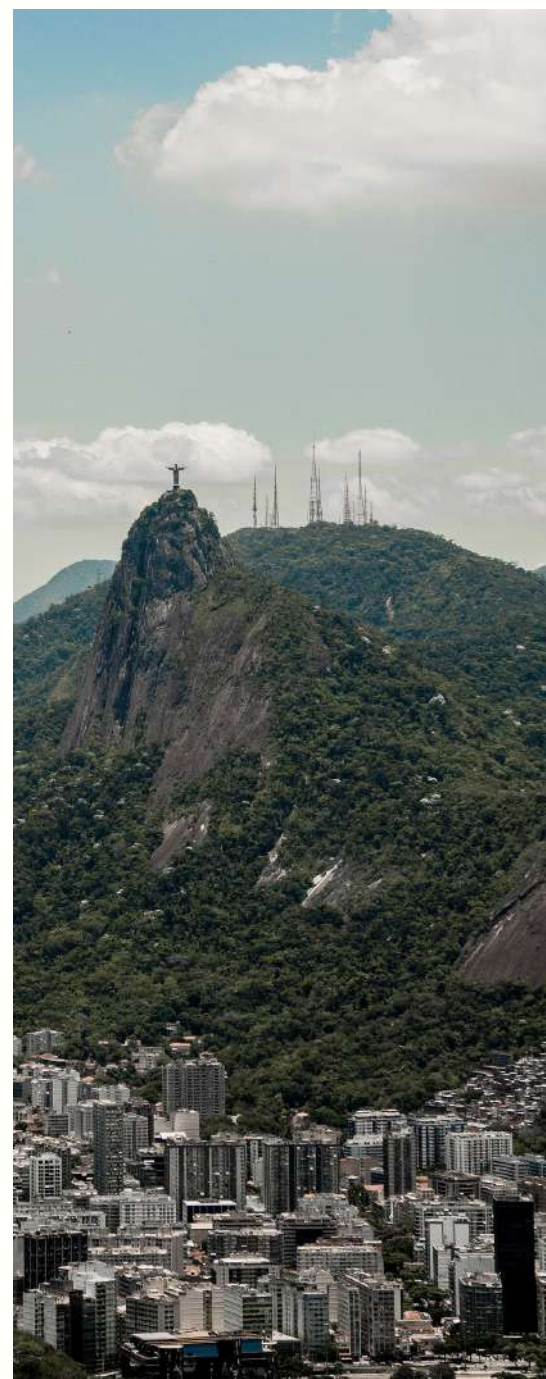
not underfunded, nor do they face high rates of poverty and crime. It is an example that spending exuberant amounts of money - that you don't have - to impress the international community won't actually solve any of the problems that diminished your reputation to begin with.

Countries that don't have the same socio-economic problems, such as Brazil, still face pushback for hosting the games for various reasons. In Japan, there was heavy pushback due to the pandemic despite the games being delayed by a year. There was a campaign lead by Japan Doctors Union and Asahi Shimbun, a newspaper, arguing that the risk of the coronavirus spreading was unacceptable.

There was an online campaign called Stop Tokyo Olympics which carried 450,000 signatures. Many criticised the Japanese Government for prioritising the economy rather than the health of its people, especially since only 15% of the Japanese population was vaccinated at the time. Although this is specific to the time of COVID-19, there have been other instances of pushback to the Olympics. In 1980 controversy sparked during the Lake Placid Winter Games, where there were plans to convert the Olympic Village into a prison after the Games. Many athletes refused to stay in the dormitories, and organisations protested against it, to no avail.

Despite the attempts to glamorise themselves, many host cities bow out from their time as host with more problems than they had in the beginning. Hosting the

Olympics won't solve the high rates of crime and poverty, nor will it resolve any political divide. The large displays and fireworks don't fix these problems, and neither does the billions of dollars thrown at these games. In fact, Rio is still paying for the Games with the debt incurred and the accelerating level of crime due to many of the evictions sought to even construct many of the venues. The money could've been spent on the ground making the lives of their people better, which is more beneficial in the long run than a fancy event.



Fool's gold

WRITTEN BY JOSHUA PAUL

THE OLYMPIC GAMES ARE UNDOUBTEDLY SPECIAL TO MANY OF US AROUND THE WORLD. I MYSELF HAVE FOND MEMORIES OF BEIJING 2008. THEN A SPORT OBSESSED 7 YEAR OLD, FOR THE FIRST TIME EXPOSED TO THE WONDERS OF THE OLYMPICS, MY FASCINATION WITH THE OLYMPICS HAS ENDURED TO THIS DAY. I'M EVIDENTLY NOT ALONE. IN NEW ZEALAND AND AROUND THE WORLD, THE VIEWERSHIP FOR THE OLYMPICS TYPICALLY SITS AT OVER 3 BILLION PEOPLE. THAT BEGS THE QUESTION, WHY?

The answer to that question likely lies in the fact that the games are an opportunity for not only athletes but regular people around the world to participate in a two-week celebration of human achievement. The spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play that the Olympics are built upon have clearly touched a chord with a global audience. Hosting the games grew over the 20th century to become a mark of accomplishment for the world's prominent cities.

The allure of hosting the games was such that cities would spend millions of dollars just to make a bid. In their bid to host the 2016 edition, for example, the city of Chicago reportedly spent more than \$100 million. That's \$100 million that wasn't spent on Education, Health, or Social Security and Welfare in a city that

appears to need it dearly.

Despite initial support and a successful campaign that led to their bid being accepted, the city of Boston withdrew its bid to host the 2024 Olympics after significant political opposition grew against it. The anti-games protesters cited concerns over city planning being focused around an extremely short-term global event rather than being focused on the best interests of Bostonians. The Olympic Committee is now in a tight spot, with many eligible cities deciding against the Olympics and the desire to host generally waning.

Alongside the enormous and growing costs associated with making a bid, the revenue collected for hosting has also been in a steady decline. The percentage of hosting revenue sent to the

International Olympic Committee (IOC) has increased from around 4% at the 1992 games in Barcelona to an enormous 70% in 2016. Hosting the Olympics is simply no longer a profitable exercise for host cities.

This leaves the IOC in an odd position. On the one hand, their product is a widely loved and memorable global event that has the power to garner the attention of billions. On the other, it holds the rights to an event that no one really wants to host anymore, despite the attention the Olympics promise to bring.

My favourite solution to this problem is the introduction of permanent host cities, which would rotate and host the games once every 16 to 20 years through an Olympic Circuit. These cities



would be able to build or upgrade infrastructure safely in the knowledge that their investment wouldn't be left redundant after only two weeks of use. The cities that immediately come to mind include Los Angeles, London, Beijing, Sydney, and Paris. The IOC could also elect to have one additional Olympiad in each cycle reserved for a specially selected random city to add some variety.

A multi-city circuit has various benefits, including both a sense of certainty for organisers and a variety for athletes and audiences. For organisers, having sureness as to when their events will be held allowing for long term planning. Hosts will also be able to construct infrastructure safe in the knowledge that the investment will not be redundant at the conclusion of the games. For athletes, the "Olympic Circuit" option provides appeal as it offers a range of locations and climates across different continents to look forward to and ensures that cities can maintain a high standard of safety and care. The nature of the circuit would also mean that, except for in extreme cases, any individual athlete would never compete in the same city twice.

If it's a way to save the games that we know and love, I am all for the introduction of an Olympic Circuit. It would ensure the long-term sustainability of the games without entirely excluding other eligible cities. The nature of the Olympics is such that people are drawn to it. Consequently, I am sure that somehow the games will continue to exist in some form. My only hope is that its spirit will endure.





Global pandemics and empty arenas

WRITTEN BY TULSI KHANNA

THE LESS OBVIOUS GAINS OF HOSTING THE 2020 OLYMPIC GAMES - IN THE MIDST OF A GLOBAL PANDEMIC, THE GLOBAL SPORTING COMMUNITY DECIDED THERE WAS NO BETTER TIME TO BATTLE IT OUT FOR THOSE MARVELLOUS, MAGNIFICENT, MASTERLY MEDALS. THUS WE SAW THE WORLD'S BEST ATHLETES TAKE THE STAGE FOR THE 2020 OLYMPIC GAMES HOSTED IN TOKYO, JAPAN. AS WE WATCHED FROM OUR COUCHES, BEDS, LECTURE SEATS, AND BASICALLY ANYWHERE ELSE YOU WENT, I COULD NOT HELP BUT NOTICE THE EMPTY ARENA AND THE DEAFENING SILENCE WHEN AWE-INSPIRING ATHLETES BROKE WORLD RECORDS AND WON GRAND GOLD MEDALS WHILE THERE WAS NO AUDIENCE TO CHEER THEM ON.

Hosting the Olympic games is no cheap affair; costing Japan at least \$15.4 billion made these games one of the most expensive. They were held without any foreign tourists or even Tokyo locals attending; even the bars were closed! This tends to happen when you hold the biggest sporting event known to humankind during a state of emergency. This means that the money that the audience would have spent on accommodation, food, drinks, and tourism was no longer a factor in the Olympic Games. So what exactly did Japan gain from being the host?

One of the biggest spends to get Tokyo ready for the games was in the construction industry. Kengo Kuma designed a sixty-eight thousand-seat national stadium and seven other venues, which cost about \$3 billion. Another twenty-five venues were renovated. Despite these astronomical construction projects, these stadiums will be used for soccer, rugby matches, and cultural events after the games. With Japan still being in a state of emergency, it may be a while before they reap the benefits of these lush new stadiums. However, it is comforting to know that one

day this money may have been well spent for this nation.

The athletes' village that was newly built for the games, which cost approximately \$490 million, will be converted into apartments. Although Tokyo is one of those lucky places where housing is not a life-ruining existential crisis due to their unusual degree of control over zoning and building rules, it is good to see that these new buildings will not go to waste.

A rather unlikely gain that the Olympic games bought to Japan



was through the sale of televisions. The surge of COVID-19 in Japan meant the games were confined to being watched on screens. An electronic retailer told TIME it saw an increase of 30% in sales for OLED TVs in July compared to last year. If you can't sit in a brand new sixty-eight thousand seat arena, why not splurge on a brand new grand TV!

The 2020 Olympic games saw the victory of Japan's female athletes. Japanese women fought hard for their medals and were on the medals podium thirty three out of fifty-eight times for Japan. This was a rather inspiring performance for Japanese women as it showed them they could achieve big things if they wish to. Kathy Matsui, known for coining the term "womenomics" said this achievement would put the economic benefits of empowering women on a pedestal. This could have significant flow-on impacts for the Japanese economy as the latest World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report showed Japan ranked 120th out of 156 countries. Matsui further wrote about how closing the gender employment gap could increase Japan's GDP by 10%. The 2020 Olympic games may be just the thing to do this.

Therefore, we see that Japan hosted the games in the most unlikely of scenarios, and athletes did the best they could. For some, this was the best anyone had ever seen them do. Even with empty arena's and in a state of emergency, Japan's money has a chance of still being well spent.

MYOB column

Mixing business and sport

Principal Partner of the Silver Ferns, MYOB knows it takes passion, resilience, sacrifice and tenacity to be an elite sportsperson, and business owners and professionals put in the same 24/7 commitment to their operations.

Back in 2016 their Education Manager, Shailan Patel, shared his experience of mixing business and sport, using one to help the other part of his life.

Read his article of the lessons he learnt from sport, and how he uses them to help further his professional career [here](#).



INFINZ



WHO WE ARE

The Institute of Finance Professionals NZ Inc (INFINZ) is the member based industry body for professionals working and participating in finance roles and the financial services eco-system.

The INFINZ membership is divided into age groups - with the under 30s group comprising of the **Young Finance Professionals (YFP)** and its sub-group **Young Women in Finance (YWF)**.

YOUNG WOMEN IN FINANCE - YWF

The YWF group is a network of young women with an interest in finance, who wish to engage and connect, whilst increasing their industry knowledge and advancing their careers.

YWFs are automatically enrolled in the YFP group.

YWF & YFP MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Access to eight free dedicated networking/speaker events
- **Opportunity for scholarship to attend INFINZ Conference**
- Access to other INFINZ events at free or discounted rates
- Networking with senior industry professionals and peers
- Free online access to INFINZ 101s - capital market essentials
- Automatic enrolment to Young Finance Professionals (YFPs)
- INFINZ Biannual Journal

UPCOMING YWF AND YFP EVENTS

- Women in the Corporate World Breakfast - Friday 3 September
- Funding Female Founders - Thursday 9 September
- Becoming a CFO - Wednesday 15 September
- INFINZ Annual Conference - Thursday 28 October

For the full list of upcoming events go to: [infinz.com/site/events_calendar/](https://www.infinz.com/site/events_calendar/)

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