Invest in Sport, Says British IOC Member

Craig Reedie tells Around the Rings there is “quite clear and natural pressure” on the British government to capitalize on the huge popularity of the London Olympics.

“I honestly believe the country will expect them to do that.”

UK Sport has given an undertaking to continue to fund some of the successful Olympic sports to ensure there is no slump in the performance of Great Britain at the Rio 2016 Olympics.

The government would have to come up with a plan to boost grassroots sport and school sports, he insisted.

Reedie, who became an IOC vice president two weeks ago, joined British Olympic Association chairman Colin Moynihan in calling for the government to deliver stronger support for sport to ensure the momentum behind Team GB’s staggering success at London 2012 is maintained through the Rio Games.

Moynihan spoke to reporters the day after Super Saturday, a milestone for Great Britain who won six golds on its best day at an Olympics in more than 100 years.

Moynihan had strong words for David Cameron’s coalition government, stressing that success like that seen by Team GB on...
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The Hula Report

Banned from the Games, Clueless Drivers, Rio Pains

The most commonly banned substance at the 2012 Olympics carries the logo of the London Games.

Schweppes Abbey Well may indeed be LOCOG’s official water, but bottles of the drink cannot pass through security at venues unless empty. Admittedly, no beverages are allowed past the screening, including other products of bottled beverage sponsor Coca-Cola. But it seems to test the credulity of Olympic security to banish innocuous, inert beverages such as water.

Did Coca-Cola Schweppes understand how much of a risk the stuff would be to the London Olympics? With long lines of people at fountains in the Olympic Park filling their empty containers, Abbey Well is really the official water bottle of the London Games.

Where are you going? Those who look with disdain on the transport privileges enjoyed by the IOC will be happy to hear the drivers of the BMWs that ply the Olympic lanes often do not know the way. That’s because some of the volunteer drivers are from other parts of the U.K., not London. We hear stories of IOC members being treated to 90-minute tours of the city for journeys that are supposed to last one-third that time.

Rio de Janeiro, which won its bid for the 2016 Olympics with a powerful message, seems to have lost its mojo for communication. Already under fire from the IOC for falling behind in preparations for the Games, international media relations are now suspect.

A press conference organized a few days ago for the four-year mark to the Games was poorly handled, especially from a city about to host the Games. It started 30 minutes late. Rio 2016 chief Carlos Nuzman was billed as one of the presenters, but he was off tending to his duties as Brazilian Olympic Committee president.

That left chief exec Leo Gryner and comms chief Carlos Villanovo to handle the press conference while Mayor Eduardo Paes and Rio Olympic corporation chief Maria Silva joined briefly by video from Brazil. While all have command of English, only Portuguese was spoken, fine for the sizable Brazilian press corps. But the dozen-plus international reporters struggled to make sense of the obtuse, elliptical translation coming out of the earphones.

Written questions were taken in advance, leaving the internationals to wait 30 minutes for the chance to pipe up, only after organizers realized that the non-Brazilian press corps had been left out. And even those questions in English were answered in Portuguese.

The road to Rio may be as tortured as rush-hour traffic in the Cidade Maravilhosa.
McDonald’s Embraces Olympics Recruiting Role

McDonald’s head of global alliances tells *Around the Rings* he expects Hamburger Universities to again play a role at the Olympics in recruiting and training Games volunteers.

The fast-food giant recruited and trained all 70,000 so-called “Games Makers” here in London, says John Lewicki, and plans to do so again for future events the company sponsors.

“Everyone of our host countries going forward, whether it be for the Olympics or the FIFA World Cup, is already talking to the organizing committees about how we can be involved with training their volunteers,” he tells *ATR*.

“It’s a little different in different parts of the world. We have seven Hamburger Universities throughout the world. Certainly with Brazil, we are in that dialogue for both Rio and the World Cup.”

He also says that everyone trained through a McDonald’s course in the U.K. can receive credit toward a hospitality college certificate.

Lewicki was speaking to *ATR* inside the world’s largest McDonald’s, a two-floor 32,000 square foot behemoth adjacent to the Olympic Stadium in London.

Virtually all of the restaurant will be dismantled and recycled following the 2012 Games. Lewicki says the restaurant will be a model for how McDonald’s builds restaurants at future Games.

He says sales at the flagship Olympic Park location are “unprecedented.”

“We’re almost 100 percent above all of our projections,” he tells *ATR*.

“The first couple of days we put our crew under a little bit of stress, but they rallied unbelievably.”

He says there are no exact sales figures, as the first week’s numbers are still being tallied, but notes that McDonald’s has had a “pretty high capture rate” and the restaurant has remained busy.

Being arguably the most visible Olympic sponsor doesn’t add any pressure to McDonald’s, according to Lewicki.

“The number of fans that are coming into our restaurants, the only pressure we feel is to make sure we’re servicing them appropriately and giving them a good hot, fresh, quality meal. Other than that, we’re proud to be here and proud to be one of the main places people go.”

Lewicki says McDonald’s has a simple vision for what will make a successful London 2012.

“To get our message out and talk about the quality food we provide for anybody and everybody who comes to the Games.”

He’s also slow to pick a favorite McDonald’s item.

“There are so many,” he says contemplatively. “I love our smoothies now…what we call a McDouble. Let me tell you, when I was in college, I used to be able to eat a couple quarter pounders and fries and shakes – that used to be my drink. Now I’ve dialed it back a bit.”

All four McDonald’s locations on Olympic Park are staying busy. (ATR/Panasonic Lumix)

The world’s largest McDonald’s. (ATR/Panasonic Lumix)
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Usain Bolt gives high marks to Team GB’s astonishing performance and to London 2012 organizers after successfully defending his 100m title with an electrifying Olympic record run of 9.63 seconds.

Written by Mark Bisson

“Britain is just a wonderful place,” he told reporters after his race in the blue ribbon event of the Games. “They have done so well in so many different sports, especially cycling… I have been watching a few sports on TV… and rowing.

“I think it’s just a great Olympics, it’s just wonderful.”

Bolt, who has run the three fastest 100m of all time – in Beijing, Berlin and now London – said the victory was all the sweeter “because a lot of you guys doubted me.”

In the build-up to the 100m final, Bolt said he’s been relaxing in the Olympic Village by watching his compatriots compete in a number of sports.

Bolt has also “watched tennis a lot” and maintained an interest in rowing, cycling and swimming; he admits to being thrilled by the “speed ones” that clearly match his style.

Many people continue to label the 25-year-old Jamaican as a sprint legend, but he joked off the tag with his trademark humor. “I am never going to say I am the greatest until after the 200m,” he said.

London 2012 chairman Sebastian Coe had warm words of praise for Bolt’s 100m triumph that lit up the Games a day after he described Britain’s three golds in track and field on Super Saturday as the “greatest day of sport I have ever witnessed”.

“I never thought he’d lose that race,” Coe said. “He just knew too much, you only have to look at how he came out of that semi-final.

“The difference between winning and losing in an Olympic Games is the way you control yourself, your nerves, your environment for the last 40 minutes [before the race] and he does that to perfection. He does it better than anybody I know.

“Whatsoever you see going on in terms of the gestures and the cabaret, that guy just knows exactly how to close the deal.”

NBC, which provides the single largest source of revenue for the IOC, came under criticism for not showing the 100m final live. New 400m champion Sanya Richards-Ross said she was also disappointed that her event was not screened live by the U.S. broadcaster.

IOC communications director Mark Adams hit back at the criticism. He said the 100m race was available live-streamed, with NBC already reporting record figures for the London Games. “They are a good partner. I don’t think it is for us to tell them how to reach their audience. They tried to get the moment where they would reach the biggest possible audience, which they did.”
day 8 would only be repeated if more investment came and there was more emphasis on school sports to produce the Olympians of the future.

“What is absolutely important and the focus for those in power is to make sure that inspiration is translated into participation,” he said.

“And that requires a step change in sports policy; that requires everybody who works with those in power to focus on making sure that we have a stronger school sports policy.

“Better facilities and more access to facilities, not closing playing fields and giving the young people of this country an opportunity to take the inspiration that they’re feeling the length and breadth of the country and to turn that into greater participation, so that we then can help them develop their talents and ultimately see the very best of them shining on the Olympic stage in the future.”

Moynihan claimed that for the last seven years, “we’ve been treading water – if we can’t do something as a nation about this now, then we never will”.

Prime Minister Cameron has been a frequent spectator at Olympic events, and although Moynihan said he had not spoken to him about the issue, the performances on show would speak for themselves.

“It is always going to be difficult to make the argument, but it is made much easier when Team GB deliver such inspirational performances and when politicians around the country look at a population absolutely inspired by those performances,” he said.

Moynihan added that the athletes have the most “powerful voice” and that he expected to see current and former athletes come out after the Games and call for “more opportunities for future generations”.  

**Christian Radnedge’s Olympic Haiku**

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